MEMORIES OF A SCHOOL INSPECTOR

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MEMORIES OF A SCHOOL INSPECTOR

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OF A

SCHOOL INSPECTOR

THIRTY-FIVE YEARS
IN LANCASHIRE AND SUFFOLK

BY

A. J. SWINBURNE

FORMERLY ONE OF H.M. INSPECTORS OF SCHOOLS

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CHAPTER I

SCHOOL AND OXFORD DAYS

I COME of a very old Saxon stock.

> "The Louthers and Swinburnes and Featherstonhaughs
> Against the Norman waged the wars"

runs an old ballad carefully preserved by the members of one branch of the family, by whom it was handed to me. "The eminent house of Swinburne," says Burke, in his "History of the landed gentry" (Note p. 71), "is amongst the most ancient in the kingdom, deriving from the flower of the nobility of Europe, and bearing no less than eighty-six quarterings on its shield. It enumerates as lineal progenitors, the early Kings of France, many Emperors, Dukes of Normandy, the Plantagenets, Kings of England, the Percies (including Hotspur), the Nevilles, all the Greys, the Willoughby, D'Eresbys, the Warrens, Howards, Cliffords, Vescies, Mortimers, FitzHughs, FitzAlans, FitzWalters, Radcliffes, the Bohuns, Vauxes, Dacres of the North, Widvilles, De Ross, De la Poles, Mowbrays, Beauchamps, etc., etc. It is worthy of note that eighteen out of the twenty-five, barons who wrenched Magna Charta from King John were direct lineal ancestors of the Swinburnes." So great, independent, and impartial an authority, as Burke—himself a baronet, and holding a high post in the Heralds' Office—is not to be despised; and in these days one comes across so many would be descendants of royalty (Edward the first preferred) that it seems advisable to start with Burke's own note, a parallel of which it is not easy to find, even in pages addicted to laudation, as peerages, etc., are apt to be.

When Sir Adam de Swinburne, Sheriff of Northumberland, for speaking sharply to the king in 1317, was imprisoned, the Middletons broke into open revolt on his behalf.

About 1400 A.D., Sir Thomas Swinburne held Bordeaux when England's eyes were riveted on our mutinous French provinces, as they were long after in the "Indian Mutiny" on the heroes who saved us India, though in the earlier instance all was lost.

The Swinburne brasses at Little Horkesley in Essex, still rank among the finest in England, and Coldham Hall and Euston Park, the latter now in the possession of the Duke of Grafton, were once the property of the Swinburnes and Rookwoods—a Rookwood marrying a Swinburne heiress—with vast estates, since similarly inherited by the Berners and others.

Later, the wife of that Henry Swinburne who, towards the end of the eighteenth century wrote "Travels in Spain," a standard work, endeavoured by the loan of her wardrobe, to aid the escape of Marie Antoinette, whose sincere attachment to Henry and his wife are matters of history. Hannah More describes Henry, the charm of whose personality was great, as "a neat and modest little man," which recalls the poet, who was also, strangely enough, described as a neat and modest little man; and more strangely still, if one characteristic marks a family which has with so much virility sustained a male succession all these generations—for it was an old family in the birth time of the Cavendishes, the Cecils, the Seymours, the old families of our time—that characteristic is devotion to the causes of creed and crown. Ardent Roman Catholics until quite recently and often described as "munificent benefactors," of the abbeys, friars, etc.; their pedigree dotted with priests, nuns, and Jesuits, their name will, nevertheless, be for ever associated with the fame of Algernon Charles Swinburne, though he was possessed by diametrically opposite views, on those two supremely important points. But after all, utterly subversive as his ideas on creed and crown are of those of his fathers, it is the same fire which burns in his veins, veins in which the blood of Hotspur flows; nor need we quote "Corruptio optimi pessima" for there is abundance of justification of his claim to a seat among the immortals, without a line which could corrupt even a tom-tit.

My father, a clergyman who built a church in Bethnal

Green, placed me at Merchant Taylors' School, in Suffolk Lane. Suffolk Lane ! how curious, that more than two-thirds of my life were destined to be passed in Suffolk lanes. Suffolk Lane dates from the famous Suffolk, Duke De la Pole, and it is interesting to note that the neighbouring Duck's Foot Lane has nothing to do with ducks, as one naturally, from its proximity to the river, might have supposed, but that the word is a corruption of Duke, it being originally called, the Duke's Foot Lane, and there is still a Suffolk House in Cannon Street, where a Mr Eyre lives.

At our first interview, the headmaster, Doctor Hessey, whose pompous manner will live in the memory of his scholars as long as the genuine kindness of heart it nearly concealed, asked me, almost before the butler was out of the room, " Which is the first day of the week ? " which question like Suffolk Lane foreshadowed my future, but unfortunately my future was not yet there and I could not make the *riposte* I have since found so useful : " I am here to ask, not answer questions." I therefore stammered Monday, and in the bewilderment of mind that followed stumbled all through the week to Saturday, never imagining that one lived who could call Sunday a week-day.

My school-days were marred by having to pass through fire in the shape of caning to MEMBLOKA and other revolting irregularities of the Greek and Latin tongues, and it was not until I reached the sixth form, that the kindness of an assistant master who ruled by love, developed unsuspected qualities in me which caused the headmaster to cancel his recommendation to my father to remove me from the school. A translation in verse of one of Horace's Epodes—a penalty for unpunctuality—changed the frowns on Dr Hessey's face to smiles, but a second attempt to turn Latin Sapphics into English Sapphics—with one verse ending " nude among lions," drew smiles of a less gratifying kind from my favourite master, earnestly as he struggled for my sake to suppress them. A set of Latin Hexameters at Oxford, however, won me a scholarship; and this led to my first experience of a Suffolk farmer, for a prize was offered for the best Latin poem on Westminster Abbey, and to visit that edifice, to take notes on the monuments, to lose my pencil, and to accept the offer of another from a portly, well-to-do-looking, middle-class

individual, possessed of charmingly cosy and engaging manners were, comparatively speaking, "the work of a moment"; and how brimful he was of the very information, I had come in search of. How fortunate I esteemed myself to meet him, a Suffolk farmer he told me he was, and a most unique specimen he proved to be. His graphic description of Cambridge, where he had just left his boy, the ambition of his life being to have a son at the 'varsity, completed my subjugation. A father himself, he felt he told me an interest in other fathers' sons, and wished, if I would allow him, to show me where I could lunch expeditiously, and at a moderate cost, that was to say if bread and cheese were good enough for me, as they were for him. We threaded our way through narrow streets, each one dirtier and dingier than its predecessor. My companion stopped suddenly in front of a door which opened on to a long, covered passage. I followed him up this passage until we came to a bar on our left and a closed door on our right, which we entered and found ourselves in a low, narrow room, and as the door swung to heavily after us, I had the sensation of being in prison. This sinister apartment had but a small window, which gave on to a back yard, and had it not been for the reassuring and rubicund countenance of my Suffolk friend, I should have imagined myself in the haunts of robbers and murderers. An inner door covered with green baize and heavily studded with brass nails, which effectually prevented all noises from within or without being heard, suggested to my startled imagination, a coffin lid.

I had not been long there before another man joined us, whose aspect savoured somewhat of a bookmaker; by this time, my position had become similar to that of the fox in the game, when the geese are getting the best of it, for seated in the recess, with my back to the window, I was completely hemmed in by my Suffolk friend and the last arrival. My eyes began to search furtively for some means of egress, I scanned the diamond panes of the small window, which was securely barred, and wondered what way of escape would be possible, should that eventuality arise. They were exceedingly hospitable in their invitations to me to partake of my own beer. Now, it has always been my habit never to drink until I have finished eating, and then very little; at Oxford,

when I was training for the eights, there was generally competition among my fellow oarsmen as to who should sit next to me—in order to finish the half I usually left of the dearly prized pint of beer, allowed each man. My growing anxiety was temporarily allayed, by the arrival of a third stranger, an innocent-looking country man, whose exuberant spirits he explained, were due to a windfall in the shape of an unexpected legacy. Someone suggested a game, and my wits, dazed though they were at finding myself in this strange *milieu*, became instantly arrested by the methods of the players. One of the men covered three pieces of a broken church-warden with his hand, leaving only one end of them visible, the others present being invited to guess which of the three pieces of pipe was the longest. The table glittered with gold, and sovereigns changed hands at a bewildering speed, but green as I was, I could but observe that they were not all good coin of the realm. I was not at first drawn into the game, but watched the innocent-looking country man being, as I imagined, fleeced.

"He's dead drunk," the other two informed me under their breath—"why don't you join in the game, and have some of his money, he's bound to lose it all."

"Poor devil," I thought, "how on earth can I save him."

My vague fears becoming crystallized, the words "Open Sesame" began to hammer in my brain. What was to open, or how, I could not imagine, for the hopeless window and the double door, from which I was as effectually barred by the big bodies of the men, precluded all possibility of escape. That they should not suspect me of antagonism, while trying to conceive some plan of action, I proceeded to join in the game. "I've run dry," I said after one or two attempts at solving the riddle of the church-wardens, "and I've only a cheque on me."

"You've got your watch chain," the bookmaker-like individual replied, "you could raise a fiver on that, and perhaps win twenty with it."

My mind made itself up without my assistance, so swiftly did it act on inspiration, "Is there a pawn-shop near," I asked. Minute directions were given me, and before they had time to object, I was out of the room, down the ghoulish passage into the street and never did air seem sweeter than

that foul slum-polluted air did to me that day. Breathlessly inquiring the way, I flew to the nearest police station only to be met by the most aggravating composure—neither the inspector nor any of his myrmidons evincing the least promptitude, nor, indeed, any animation whatever. When, however, they had grasped the fact that my visit was not so much on my own behalf as with the object of saving the innocent-looking country man, their merriment knew no bounds, their stolid control giving place to roars of laughter. "You're quite sure, you've only lost a trifle yourself?" said the Inspector. "You're the only one who ever got out of that den so lightly. The one you wanted to help is the leader of the gang."

Before the two constables and I entered the street three figures stepped from the passage door, crossed the street, and vanished down a neighbouring court. "There they go—now," I gasped; but the ways of the police are not as our ways, —to my bitter disappointment, stopping dead, they commenced a stealthy pursuit—in the opposite direction,—entering so many public houses with so much confidential whispering that I, who of course had to pay at each bar, soon began to realise that the remedy was growing worse than the disease.

Consequently, after thanking them with many good wishes for their ultimate success, I left them, and caught the five o'clock train at Paddington for Oxford. I was somewhat consoled to know that those scoundrels had seen me with the police, and not many years after I had the satisfaction of reading of their arrest and sentences, each receiving about five years of penal servitude. The victim that time did drink the beer, and was found by the police, half-dead, and stripped of every valuable; and so my somewhat quixotic adventure, at any rate must have helped to rid the public of these pests; and as to the prize poem, one of the clever Elliott family, champion light-weight boxer, saving himself the expense and trouble I incurred, sat down and, out of his head, composed a fancy description of sunset on Westminster Abbey towers and won.

It reminds one of the prize competition for the best account of an elephant. The Englishman went to see an elephant, the Frenchman read about elephants, the German evolved out of his inner consciousness, the conception of an elephant. The

German won! Once before, as a small boy, I tried to warn a fellow-creature of danger, when my lips tied, as in a nightmare, had refused to come to my aid. It was at an indoor Crystal Palace meeting on Education. Crushed and almost suffocated by the crowd, and little dreaming that I should ever be anything so uninteresting as an educational official myself, I observed the antics of a fat man next to me, a man of the same type as my friend the Suffolk farmer. "Religion," he cried, "that's the point; we must have religion," and he waved his left hand enthusiastically, while with his right he emptied the coat-tail pocket of a venerable old gentleman in front, who turned his head to express hearty approval of the fat man's noble sentiment, without discovering that he was being relieved of his valuables by the enthusiast in question.

CHAPTER II

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

As the flogging those swindlers deserved suggests a subject, which no one calling himself an educationist can escape, any more than the ordinary child can escape measles—sooner or later—I propose to get it over here—with my reader's permission. In return for which favour, I promise brevity.

Corporal punishment has been for many years, as it were, a joint "to cut at and come again" in the Educational world. It has formed, a perennial subject for discussion; philanthropists, novelists, newspaper-men, parents and maiden-aunts have all of them found it a useful and at times, an engrossing theme; and I of course have my theories, but do not wish to come under the heading of maiden-aunts. Nevertheless, my experience of thirty-five years justifies me in expressing a few opinions on the subject. It is, I consider, as needful to flog for a serious offence as to use brute force if necessary to interrupt the peregrinations of a somnambulist. Bishop Blomfield used to say that if a child were whipped before it arrived at the age of three, it would need no floggings afterwards.

Parents and children themselves when the matter is put logically before them, admit the need of corporal punishment, and if teachers would only consult the parents before administering it to the children, sentimentalists who get so much out of this subject would have very little copy to work on. As a child, I myself received hidings which I richly deserved, and only wonder now that I was so lightly let off. On one occasion my father was taking duty for Cannon Battersby at Keswick Rectory, and was most anxious that the few months he was there should pass without a hitch. His dismay may be imagined, when one morning a solemn deputation presented itself at the Rectory door, with a memorial

containing the names of all the parishioners humbly praying that that beautiful locality should not be entirely deprived of its "feathered songsters."

On the other hand an encounter with so formidable a personage as a London Board-School mistress of lengthened experience, will best elucidate my remaining views on this important subject. The migration of this particular specimen from urban to rural districts is by no means a rare occurrence, and the undeserved contempt of the newcomer for country attainments, often superior to those of the town, must be heard to be believed. I remember my father-in-law, Canon Blomfield's amusement when a town teacher, who was up to his neck in horticultural and other certificates, was found looking among the leaves of the potato plant for the potatoes. It is the unfortunate H.M.I. who has to suffer, for just as a servant who has lived in the house of a big personage insists on pestering her new and humbler employer with the great lady's methods, so a London teacher trades on the magic of the name of London. And to the rustic mind, the word really has magic. Do not the Suffolk village inns paint up in large letters "London Porter," whatever that may mean? A London mistress, whom I discovered administering injudicious punishment, flew into a temper on my remonstrating mildly with her. She retired to her desk, whence after writing vigorously for some minutes, she bore down majestically upon me and trembling with rage began, "I am right then in asserting in this appeal to Whitehall and the National Union of Teachers, that you object to corporal punishment."

I replied, "Oh no, I have no objection to corporal punishment."

"Then why did you object to my boxing that girl's ears?"

"You misunderstand me, put it down thus in your notes, H.M.I. has no objection to corporal punishment, it is an excellent remedy if administered to the right person, and in his humble rural experience (of course not to be compared with yours) in nine cases out of ten it is the teacher who deserves it not the child," and then regardless of her stupefaction I briefly touched on one or two examples of the point in question.

1. Vigilance is an indispensable factor of good teaching, yet

how often a child is punished because the teacher's surveillance is slack.

2. A rule is imperfectly explained, and the child punished for misunderstanding.
3. A little head, distracted within by arithmetical intricacies, is further distracted without by the physical shock of a blow.

I remember an instance which illustrates case (1). A girl is entered in the log-book as having been caned seven times in the year. I observe her, she is a lithe, gipsy-like maiden, only thirteen, but already a woman, a bead necklace of many colours accentuating the picturesque darkness of her race.

"On the hand?" I inquire of the master, and find that the canings had taken the form of what we used to call "Benders"—floggings in fact.

"Seven times," I ejaculate, "and at her age."

"It should have been seventy times seven if I'd had my way," interjects the schoolmaster's wife, darting an adder-like look at me from behind her husband—"the bold huzzy—yes—seventy times seven!"

"Do you want to be a naughty girl?" I whisper. "No, no, I want to be good," she assures me from behind the long black hair, which almost hid her tear-stained face from view.

Alone again with the master and his wife, both turgid with bluster, I inquire the nature of the girl's offence.

"She was in the boys' playground during the dinner-hour."

I failed to see the enormity of the offence and told them so.

"Do you insinuate," the master inquired insolently, "that I did wrong in flogging her? the managers and the parents are all with me to a man."

"I insinuate nothing, and I find no fault with the chastisement except that it was not administered to the real offender."

"Where," I asked, "was the person who should have been overlooking the boys and girls during the dinner-hour—have the managers not insisted that they are not to be left alone? He," I concluded, "is the person who should have been flogged"—for I knew the master himself was responsible.

The Suffolk sea-board produces a race of children that still justify Pope Gregory's pun about Angles and Angels, and that attracts artists round the schools in such numbers as actually

to necessitate prohibitory steps on the part of the attendance authorities. Children with brilliant colouring and eyes as bright as sea-washed pebbles in the sun, wearing bead necklaces of barbaric design, necklaces never seen inland, and which are probably relics of the old smuggling if not of still older days, while their voices seem to have caught the music of the sea.

But where are children sweeter than at Kessingland, the air of which breathes again in some of Rider Haggard's delightful work. The most charming houses in Suffolk gravitate towards this fairy lightland-strip. It was at Kessingland in an infants' school, one sultry afternoon, I witnessed a delicious allegory presented by a miniature Adam and Eve. As silent vigilance is the only key to childhood's mind, as well as nature generally, I effaced myself as far as possible behind the teacher's desk and watched. The teacher was away at the back of the school, stooping over a child in the third row; in the front sat Adam and Eve two six years' old, to whose beauty, beyond my power of description, a poet might have done justice. The baby girl had made a rough Nought and Cross design on her slate with all the rapture of illicit art, and every time I looked the space between her and the boy was dwindling, although I never saw her move. The boy catches sight of this ravishing design, and a piteous appeal for help is in the eye, that, intended for the teacher, wanders in my direction, whence of course there could be "neither voice, nor any to answer, nor any that regarded." Eve is nearer—another piteous appeal from Adam. She is still closer, his eyes implore aid wildly. She is close, a despairing glance for teacher's aid and then "Gooo away," he grunts intrepidly, and Eve is thrust back. The scene is repeated, near, nearer, and at last close, and this time—he falls!

With an arm around each other's neck, they are together at last, embellishing the rude design, a delicious dream, to be rudely dispelled by a shower of blows from the rear—for thus were they expelled from their Paradise.

Blows, shame and disgrace, all might have been averted had the teacher been to the fore instead of in the rear, her eyes free to wander over the whole class, instead of being fixed on one portion of it. Individual attention is certainly necessary, but with a black board at one's command there is

no need for a teacher to neglect the whole class while she gives undivided attention to one member of it. It is quite possible that the children felt instinctively that they were being unjustly punished, and as, *littera scripta manet*, I explained orally to the mistress that as flowers turn their leaves towards the light, children's faces turn towards their teacher, and that restlessness in them is obedience to a higher command than hers, and that spaces between unwatched children vanish as surely and imperceptibly as the grass grows. The meaning of the words, Education (drawing out) and Instruction (building up) is too often overlooked. The delicate tendrils of the mind should be drawn out by gentle and vigilant supervision; just as the sun without descending to each individual plant, induces and matures its growth. The plant under the influence of the far off sun builds itself up, each cell resembling a brick, each cell being its own bricklayer. Character best builds itself up in like manner. Does not the Greek word *charasso* mean "I prick out," and does not each tiny action prick the life design? Her method savoured rather of destruction than instruction; and I asked her what would happen if the stove went round to warm each child, and saw by the expression of her face that she perceived a *double entente* in my question quite unintended by myself.

I do not wish to convey a false impression of teachers, for no class is more conscientious and devoted to its work than theirs, and they have taught me far more than I ever taught them, while the children have taught us both still more. The Schedule System, for which the board of education and not the teachers is responsible, has been removed, but although the relief felt in consequence is very great [1] the teachers still bear the marks of its fetters, which, as in the case of grammar, use has almost endeared to them. I once saw a teacher who, after arranging her class in a crescent, rushed round it, like a shepherd's dog, which leaps at the ear of each sheep. She speaks for them, she thinks for them, she almost breathes for them.

"We won't be druv," said Mr Lowther, the father of the Speaker to me, but children on the contrary will "be druv" provided they love their teacher. The Eastern shepherd

[1] See Appendix (I) which should be read by County Councils returning to the wallow as one I know is.

however leads his sheep. I make these remarks with the less hesitation—as they really belong to Ancient History. Corporal punishment, in any but its justifiable form, has long been practically dead in the Elementary Schools—and no where more so, I am proud to add, than in East Suffolk.

CHAPTER III

LATER OXFORD DAYS

I LIVE in the country, but "I know the tragic heart of towns," and the knowledge of both is indispensable if one is to form a reliable judgment on their respective merits.

A glance from the great Eastern trains as one gets nearer London, proves that town is, after all, but a conglomerate village. Church, school and public-house are here, but long rows of small, ugly houses replace the picturesque cottage while yards usurp the place of gardens until even these, as one approaches the terminus, dwindle to flower boxes and bird cages. No squire thrones it in these unsalubrious districts, and the absentee employers live westwards, the poor being thus separated from the rich, a far less satisfactory grouping than the rural. My nightmares still take the form of being lost in some of those Bethnal Green courts and alleys, slums where even a policeman dared not enter alone, and where hatred, robbery and even murder seemed to lurk in the hungry eyes one encountered.

So many years ago that I dare not count them now, a group of loafers were playing pitch-and-toss somewhere behind Shoreditch Church. I had just had a birthday and was the proud possessor of a new silver watch, and one may imagine my calf-like delight when, as they made room for my sister and myself to pass, one of the said loafers politely inquired of me the hour. They were still there on our return, but this time their evident admiration for my new possession was not as gratifying to my vanity as their previous interest had been. They certainly made way for us, but before we could pass through their ranks they had closed up again, one seizing me by the elbows, another by the throat, while a third helped himself to the brand new watch. We both called loudly and struggled, but all was of no avail and my small sister, finding

that she could not regain possession of the beautiful new toy, burst into tears and smashed its face with her little fist. We were then allowed to pass but, although it was broad daylight and onlookers abounded, no one would have thought of interfering, even if more serious harm had befallen us.

One sees loafers in Suffolk villages, but not in work hours; they stand about in groups with hands in pockets, but at all events their hands are in their own and not in other people's pockets. A clergyman's office in such London districts as these I have just been describing is no sinecure, but he is however rewarded, even in this world, as my father was, by occasionally unearthing unexpected wealth of character from beneath forbidding and sordid exteriors. A prize-fighter named Jobbins underwent conversion and was admitted into my father's church, and he in his turn actually converted my father to a belief in boxing, on the lines of self defence. My brother and I were therefore allowed to take lessons in self defence; but when we had convinced Jobbins that we were now able to defend ourselves, he approached us confidentially, and inquired in a hoarse whisper as if fearing that one of our pious parents might overhear "Well when yer've knocked him off so yer ain't agoin' to leave 'im alone are yer?" We thought we weren't!

If ever an exterior was misleading, his was. No one would have dreamed that that slack coated, baggy-trousered individual, was the possessor of a divinely beautiful figure; yet Praxiteles himself could have rejoiced over such a model. His grace and strength of limb as well as his magnificent pluck conquered and bewitched our youthful fancy; we worshipped him!

The seed of these lessons bore fruit, however, many years afterwards, for when my brother, now Canon Swinburne, then an undergraduate in his third year, was strolling out of Oxford, on the 5th of November, to avoid the rows which generally took place within, a stone-mason passing shouted:

"Hi, yer a-losin' of yer pocket 'andkerchief!" He at once felt in the tail-coat of his pocket to discover that it had been filled with refuse of the most unsavoury description. No young man likes his immaculate evening attire polluted in this

manner, and yearning to spoil something in return, my brother insisted on the stone-mason's company, while they repaired to an adjacent barn, where with his bosom friend Briggs (the late M.P.) as his second, he took his revenge *à la* Jobbins, in the most masterly style imaginable, confining himself to self-defence for many a long weary round, but eventually acting on the precept of his great master—and going in with a finishing "Long Melford" from the left—a blow which left him a broken finger—so hard was that skull!

Boxing leads to more disaster than it saves; and as to the plea of the defence of an assaulted woman, etc., it is absurd—unless there are people present to see fair play—which of course there are *not*—a brute will be a brute, and brute strength can kick boxing to death. Why not wrestle with a bull? In this case, however, there was fair play; and no one's eyes were more opened than those of the stone-mason—so much the stronger man of the two—until they were closed.

On the other hand, all sport certainly contributes to the foundation of character, teaching patience, control of one's temper, vigilance, concentration and generosity of outlook. I myself can claim a certain amount of proficiency in riding, boxing, swimming, skating, rowing, golf, tennis, etc., and in all these amusements the management of the body is a more important factor for success than the use of the arms. Jobbins allowed us boys to hit at his face as hard as we liked with our arms only. A good rider always sits back, the skater's body regulates his skate, the golfer knows that it is the position of his body which influences his swing and so it is in all other games. Hence the expression to "put your back" into a job. The best methods do not come naturally, the ease of perfection being the outcome of a perfect control of the muscles. This I have often told the teachers, for there is too much tongue, arm, and leg work so to speak in their teaching.

"Go back to your desk and do not be all over the place," I have said to them repeatedly.

"Keep still, and watch, as the best tennis-players do."

To return from this digression, I am reminded of the late Duke of Hamilton by the coincidence of his having had,

while at Oxford, a similar encounter with a carpenter on the very day when my brother fought his stone-mason. The Duke, who was crossing a country stream via a plank, met a carpenter half-way, who would not go back to allow His Grace to pass first. "Do you know me?" asked the Duke. "No, I don't know you, and don't want to." "It's the Duke of Hamilton!" an onlooker informed him. "I don't care 'oo it is; is ee 'a better man' than me?" This question receiving no answer, the truculent carpenter proceeded to divest himself of all superfluous clothing, inviting the Duke to do the same, and show which was "the better man" of the two. The Duke, nothing loth, responded to the invitation, and after a true British fight, consisting of many rounds, greeted with much applause, the combatants rehabilitated themselves, the carpenter doffed his cap, and the Duke was allowed to cross the stream first. Curiously enough, the very night on which I encountered the butcher,[1] this same Duke joined the fray—having mischievously lured two young aristocrats into the thick of a "town and gown," just as Canute lured his flatterers into the sea—because they "toadied" him. "I'll larn them to be toadies" the handsome Duke's laughing eyes seemed to say; and that he was as kind as he was brave was proved by the aid he rendered to my sister when bathing at Deauville.

Only the other day, in a small Suffolk church, where the seats had been redistributed, the miller, when requested by the churchwarden—in the presence of the congregation assembled for Sunday morning service—to vacate the seat which he (the miller) had for many years occupied—in favour of somebody else—proceeded with much deliberation to pull off his coat, saying, "You'll have to prove yerself 'a better man' than me afore I come out o' this." Needless to say he retained the seat; and that same miller on another occasion exhibited a quaint pagan philosophy characteristic of village life, when a person in authority was commenting—with a view to some action being taken—on the conduct of a woman of considerable beauty, whose reputation was anything but an enviable one, and whose example was exceedingly detrimental to others in the village.

"Well, sir," said he, "it's like this, ye see; she getting on;

[1] Page 24.

her looks can't last much longer, and then things 'll right theirselves, so I siiy, ' Let her be,' that's what I siiy."

On one occasion, with the handsome nephew of Tom Hughes (author of " Tom Brown's School Days " [1]) holding the bridge, I, who would infinitely have preferred to run away and fight again another day, was fortunate enough to dispose of a raucous, tall butcher armed with a stick, who had made himself conspicuous in the hostile crowd. But how we change! Last year I forgot to read the account of the boat race, and yet I can remember well the time when to me the race from Putney to Mortlake loomed larger than the race from birth to death. I had the honour to row in the trial boats for the Oxford University crew, for, besides being captain of the football, I was captain of my college eight. Every morning Timms, the varsity bargeman, had to wait on each happy oarsman who had been selected. There were seventy-two steps up to my room in the back quad, and no lover ever listened more breathlessly for lighter footsteps than I did for his heavy ones, and when at last he came no more, I felt that I should never smile again. Darbyshire, Benson, Woodhouse, Stainer, were all friends of mine, and to me they seemed gods among men. A magnificent specimen of manhood, T. Southey Baker, a kinsman of Southey the poet, whom I had taught to row, was chosen for the Oxford University crew when I was rejected; but I succeeded in beating him for the college sculls three years later. The first year he beat me; the second year I was winning, but caught a crab just on the post, when they said the bubbles of my submerged bad language rose to the surface. The third year I won. It was with this same varsity oar (three years) for stroke that I rowed against two fishermen of Rottingdean. The contempt of these men for smooth water and outrig-performance was immense, and even Baker's feat of raising and carrying a block of masonry none of the bricklayers could lift, did not increase their respect for his powers. We challenged their two champions to a mile out and a mile back on the sea in their heavy tub pairs, they to be steered by a boy nicknamed Shrimp, and we by a boy dubbed Prawn. For the mile out we were abreast, but curiously enough we

[1] My friend's father, brother of the author, was the pioneer champion of English golf.

gained at the turn. I was able to watch the strange single brace of their bow oar without breaking the golden rule, "Keep your eyes in the boat." The crowd crowned us with flowers, but after using their heavy oars I was unable to open my hands for two days.

CHAPTER IV

OXFORD AND DRESDEN

A FATHER! My brother was at Oxford with me, and nothing but the fact of having had two sons at Cambridge helps me to realize the anxiety a father feels concerning sons who have their own way to make through life. We, however, were not as bad as that couple whose father spared no expense in having them thoroughly tutored, to make sure of their passing smalls. On Edward, the elder of the two, special attention was bestowed. Not a line did "Dad" receive from his gifted progeny until the end of the first term, when, to a request for a further cheque, was affixed the postscript—

"Both ploughed, especially Edward!"

Where ignorance is bliss 'tis folly to be wise, and it is well that fathers frequently rejoice in the sublimest of ignorance concerning their own offspring. My father, unfolding his *Times* one morning, lighted upon a paragraph containing a highly-varnished account of an undergraduate who had nearly killed a policeman, and who had only escaped being sent down by payment of a heavy fine, and proceeded to congratulate himself on the fact that other fathers had more trouble with their sons than he, not deeming for an instant that it might be his own who had distinguished himself in this unpleasant manner.

Nevertheless it was I who had had an affray with one of the town police, who I believed to have no jurisdiction over the varsity; this law, however, unluckily for me, had changed exactly a week before. The senior Proctor, a fellow of Magdalen, stood my friend; he laughed at the colossal constable's much-garnished story, and threatened to resign if I were rusticated, as the magistrates in majority wished.

Another time, during the bread riots, when my patriotic blood was stirred by a call for special constables, to which it

responded with unbridled zeal, a zeal which would have been but ill rewarded had the Dons known of it, I discovered that to climb back into the precincts of the college was a feat beyond my powers. Two constables approach; I fear I am undone; then ignobly I offer them a royal lady's head, in return for which I am hoisted in their strong arms to that side of the college wall which, at three o'clock in the morning, seems so much the more desirable one to me. But my good father remained in ignorance of these narrow escapes I had, just as he never discovered that as boys we had a dummy, dressed up to represent a man, in the boat with us, when my brother Stanley and myself on various occasions narrowly escaped drowning, having disobeyed his strict injunctions to take a man with us on any aquatic expedition we might make.

The battle is not, however, always to the strong, nor the race to the swift. I can see now my next-door neighbour at Oxford, sitting erect with head entowelled, a strong smell of toothache mixture pervading the whole of his demesne; he so anxious not to sacrifice one hour of reading out of the twelve, and beseeching me to follow his example. He invariably offered me "Corf-fee," evidently considering it a corrective for an unstudious frame of mind. His brother, in an adjacent college, and he carried off two fellowships, but they were neither of them happy in their later fellowship of marriage, each espousing a girl from the shops opposite their lodgings. I did not get a fellowship, although I was first in the essay at St John's at the examination for that distinction—in which examination the sight of those overworked candidates who seemed to me to have their necks spliced with wraps to keep their heads up, convinced me from the beginning of that examination that the only person I could expect to beat was the man from the porter's lodge who gave out the pens. Many fellowship winners had their names down for the Inspectorship, a prize I was most lucky to secure through the patronage of the Duke of Richmond, which was procured for me by Lady Wynford, a friend of my aunt, Mrs Vicars.

When I look back across a long vista of years, I remember with infinite gratitude the kind help I received from Dr Magrath, Mr Capes, Professor Sayce, Mr Henry Nettleship, Mr Henry Simcox, Mr Humphrey Ward, and Dr Moore, the

tender-hearted principal of Teddy Hall. It was certainly through them that I achieved what little success I did. There were many things I liked better than work, and I used to hunt regularly with the Christ Church draghounds when Mr Walter Long was master. Steeplechases had a great fascination for me, and I had the triumph of beating Lord Castlereagh in one, he mounted on his own grey and I on my own bay—his courtesy under defeat being a lesson to the unmannered; and curiously enough, some years later, when Viscount Castlereagh had merged into Lord Londonderry, I came across him again in his official capacity as President of the Board of Education. It was about the time when the terrible struggle between "Kekewich" and "Gorst" was approaching its end, the latter being generally admitted to occupy the enviable position of top dog, that an administrative difficulty arose. The Honourable ——, a woman Inspector, used to come to the schools accompanied by her dog, a famous fox-terrier, whom she delighted to exhibit to the children, informing them of its prowess as an exterminator of rats. "Seven rats a minute," she told them proudly, and their sympathetic faces as they received this information recalled Spain and her bull-fights to the impartial mind. A flutter, however, arose in the Nonconformist Dovecots. "Was this kind of talk," they asked, "likely to promote Christian sympathy and brotherly love?" Whether it was between the dog and the rat they desired to promote those virtues, it is difficult to gather. Complaints beginning in a low murmur as of distant thunder gradually burst over White Hall in one close peal, necessitating immediate intervention on the part of the authorities.

It was, nevertheless, a delicate matter as to who should tackle the lady; "Gorst" was capable, but "Londonderry," the glass of fashion and the soul of courtesy, they regarded as the right man. His Lordship, who by no means liked the job, was persuaded to bring his diplomatic skill to bear upon the lady, and in due time the interview between them was brought about.

"I hear," he began, in the cold tones of impartial officialdom, "that it's a good sort of dog."

"Kills seven rats a minute!" its mistress assured him proudly.

" Seven a minute ! Seven a minute ! they never told me that ! "

The Lord President's polite interest was instantly replaced by the genuine article.

" It seems impossible, I'd give anything for a dog like that."

The solution of the difficulty became simple; the dog changed hands.

Among the pleasant memories stored in the recesses of my mind is a time I spent at Uppingham, where I took work for a friend. Dr Thring, the head master, had a most interesting personality, and I was fortunate enough to see a good deal of him while there. I won his approval by sending a boy to him to be caned after morning school. The boy carried a note in which I wrote, " Please do not cane this boy." The effect on the boy, he said, was more salutary than if he had had the medicine prescribed.

All the morning I had been highly amused in observing preparations that were being made to receive the caning that was not to come off. I watched the boy, as he stood on a form, gradually increase in size by means of copy-books which were furtively conveyed to him by other boys, who enjoyed the pleasant delusion of hoodwinking me quite as much as providing inanimate substitutes for the master's cane. During the charming walks I took in Dr Thring's company he used to let fly at the unsectarian and so-much-per-pass school, biting his words with those great white teeth of his.

" There'll be a special nail reserved for Mr Mundella's hat in a place we won't mention," he exclaimed angrily, when on the subject of popular education; and again, " We do not want to cram a few, we want to elevate them all, raise the general level, and let morality and religion come first."

Having no presentiment that I myself should one day be an H.M.I., and the subject of National Schools wearing as dry an aspect to me as it ever did and ever will to the eyes of the general public, I did not chronicle as much of his enlightening conversation as I might have done. He introduced me to the comparatively unknown mind of his favourite poet, Alexander Smith, through the medium of a little look of delightful verse entitled " City Poems," and before we parted

he offered me a mastership which I could not accept, as I was then going into the artillery, an idea afterwards abandoned for dinners in the Middle Temple, very few of which, however, were consumed by me, as the news then reached me of my appointment to the Inspectorship.

In my fourth year at Oxford my father, with his usual kindness, consented to my joining a reading-party consisting of Lord Francis Hervey, E. Nolan, and others, our tutor being the Metropolitan of India (R. S. Copleston), whose generosity, affection, and saintly character are among the most treasured reminiscences of a life blessed with more than its share of agreeable associations. He and I formed a casual club, of which we were the sole members, where all punctuality and kindred regulations were discarded, until, on the occasion of my marriage, he signalized the dissolution of the club by presenting me with a clock possessing a curiously sweet chime, which is on the mantel-shelf as I write, still going strong. Speaking of marriage recalls the absurd example of a lover's absence of mind when Canon Blomfield's daughter received from me an untidy old receipted bill instead of the proposal I had so carefully composed, and bewildering complications arose from the misunderstanding so caused. Douglas Moffat, in his "Oxford Stories," relates this occurrence under the heading, "A Receipted Bill."

The reading-party, from which I have so far digressed, was to have its headquarters at Dresden, where the various members were to meet. My father had strongly advocated the Harwich route, but some one having told me of a cattle steamer which would carry a few passengers, I, nothing loth to save some of the limited sum allowed me for expenses, determined to make one of the freight. As we were to leave London very early in the morning, I slept on board over night, that is to say, I spent the night listening to the ceaseless arguments and oaths of Dutchmen who were boarding pig-iron just over my berth. The sleepless night was a very bad foundation for the eight hours of *mal de mer* which followed. A sensation of utter desolation and terror of I knew not what began to possess me soon after we left the Thames, but, before long, my mind, or rather my body, was enlightened. Realization having replaced fear, I became the most abject of mortals, and gave myself up to the luxury of

misery. It grew dark, but I never changed the place I had occupied since our start that morning, until the steward came and assured me in broken English that the other three passengers slept as peacefully as new-born babes down below. Every other nostrum had failed, why not try sleep? I arose and stumbled down narrow brass-bound stairs, the first stairs I ever remember that mocked me by coming up of their own accord to meet my feet. Like Romeo's apothecary that Dutchman spake truth. It *was* peaceful down there in that atmosphere of pea-soup, but no hounds ever took up the music so readily as did my unseen fellow-passengers when I, as I promptly did, gave tongue. They were still in full cry when, under a shower of execrations and dragging a sheet in my wake, I struggled up those restless stairs and sank into a sort of shed in the bows where the wind fanned my brow, and within easy distance of the boat-side, which I visited with unswerving regularity every quarter of the eight unhappy hours I spent there; and it was a little before dawn, when the words "Mein Gott," uttered in a hoarse, terrified voice, broke in upon my benumbed consciousness. "Mein Gott, ein spenster," it said again, and then I realized that a sailor had mistaken my unfortunate person, enveloped in a sheet, for a spectre in its shroud.

Alas! his fright soon evaporated; he coveted my treasured seat, and, in trying to share it, literally sat upon me, his superior weight forcing mine to the ground, where I remained, being too utterly ravaged by my boat-side experiences to make any demur against such treatment, and my head sank heavily against his knees, which, encased in trousers caked with tar-grease and a miscellany of dirt, were not the resting-place I would have chosen for it, nevertheless no child ever rested more gratefully against its mother's breast. At dawn, three more choice spirits joined him, and they breakfasted on new potatoes swimming in melted butter, which were chased, captured, and finally conveyed to their mouths by fingers which had long lost any semblance of their original colour. The wailing of the unhappy cattle was the *comble* to my misery. Unlike Samuel, I did not ask, "What meaneth then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear," for did I not know but too well? Eventually I found myself in the train; how I got there, I cannot now

imagine, but, having compassed the feat in question, I slept heavily for eight hours, using the shoulder of my neighbour on either side as a cushion. Personally, I should have been quite content with one shoulder, but, as neither of them appreciated the burden of my head, it was tossed from one to the other like a tennis ball, until, finding how unshaken it was in its resolve to rest somewhere, they took it in turn to share the infliction.

"Be sure you change at Minden"—I was thus adjured by a Russian, who toyed playfully with a scimitar, which I have reason to believe was only a paper knife; "never mind if you are booked through, drag your luggage out." Arrived at Minden I followed his advice, where I sat upon my portmanteau; the weary centre of a ring of blue-clad porters, smoking huge pipes, one of whom, finally, fetched a magnificent personage with epaulettes and a sword, who bore a strange resemblance to Sir Colin Campbell, but who, I afterwards discovered, was the station-master. He was evidently renowned for his skill in tackling foreigners, for the porters stood around in obsequious admiration, while I was put through the familiar process. Slowness of articulation was apparently his theory as well as a judicious breaking of his own language to meet the requirements of the infantile mind of the foreigner.

"Zer win—der—Bilt—zer—cronk—zer—Bilt—der—*sare—wole*—BILT"—is the jibberish his rising intonation conveyed to my ears. Hopeless jibberish! I had, however, picked up on the journey one word of German, which seemed to me on every one's lips. I afterwards thought it might have been from money dealings, and, as it was my only card, I determined to play it; therefore when that glorious-looking creature, the station-master, had come to an end, exhausted with tremendous emphasis, I promptly replied, "funf."[1]

This made his failure as Interpreter only too apparent to his admiring subordinates, his rage being proportionately greater, and when he abandoned the word of two syllables to make use of a wider vocabulary, it sounded as if the concentrated essence of Teutonic hatred for the British nation descended

[1] I did not then know the meaning of this word as I did afterwards, when "funf," as a result of this episode, became my nickname at Dresden.

in a volley on my individual and unoffending head. An interval of four hours passed between the departure of the vituperative station king and the arrival of a polyglot waiter. French, had I known any, would have helped me, and I passed that dismal interval in recalling to my mind the pranks we had played on our French master at school, our favourite game having been to imperceptibly advance chairs and tables towards the corner of the room he occupied until we had securely penned him in. On one such occasion, I remember well Dr Hessey's coming into the door we had left so far behind us, gazing angrily at the empty space and singling me out for a thrashing. Why, I reflected sadly, had they not thrashed me more often, I might then have acquired enough French to get across Germany without experiencing this horrible delay. These improving thoughts were broken in upon, however, by a deliverer in the shape of the ploy glot waiter, who began briskly in his own language—

"Sprechen Sie Deutsch."

I shook my head. "Parlez-vous Français." I still shook it, this time more despondently.

"Do yer speek Eengleeshch?"

My eyes filled with tears, I grasped his hand in gratitude, while he informed me that to have broken my luggage-ticket almost amounted to a crime; *Hinc illæ lachrymæ!* Having rectified my mistake and thanked the heavens that luggage-tickets did not exist in England, I was allowed to proceed on my way.

Was it the glamour of youth that invested those two unforgettable months we spent at Dresden with such radiance? Those open-air concerts! it seems to me that I have never heard such music since, and the opera, where, for the modest sum of half a crown, the best seats in the house were at one's disposal, and that gallery where one wandered for hours revelling in the magical atmosphere of genius and realizing the imperishable trail of choice spirits long since departed, whose legacies to posterity refuse to support Mark Anthony's statement that "The good men do is oft interred with their bones." "L'enfant Prodigue," by Leonardo da Vinci, *intrigued* Lord Francis and myself not a little. "Why"—we asked at our pension during dinner, after our first acquaintance with it, amid an outburst of unrestrained

merriment, "Why had a picture called, 'The Infant prodigy,' no infant in it? 'Oh!'" we ejaculated in subdued accents on being told that it was 'The Prodigal Son.'"

Ah! they were good times, old friends, I would they could come again. Another day I asked a fat bewigged German Baroness, an old campaigner at the table d'hôte, if she would pass the cherries, at least that was what I intended to say. It appears, however, that instead of "Wollen Sie mir die Kirschen geben?" I said, "Wollen Sie mich ein kuss geben?" "Will you give me a kiss?" to which she immediately responded, "Ja wohl!" in accents which were audible in the street outside.

What vigorous lives those Teutons live, and how intoxicating is an atmosphere created by a happy blend of play and work, for as a race they seem to possess not only *la joie de vivre*, but that still rarer gift, "the joy of the intellect."

Some years later, during a January sledge drive over the pass of Mont Cenis in company with the late Lord Bantry, then Viscount Berehaven, I made a linguistic mistake, as comic, if not more so, than those already mentioned. With the aid of some borrowed skates, rusty ones, and our rug straps, we skated on the lake near the Hospice. The trout, visibly darting about under the glassy sheet of rich brown ice, delicately cupped by the snow-clad heights which shimmered in the cool but marvellously brilliant sun, were still fresh in our memory when we called on the monks who, in French, politely asked us to join them at *Messe*.

Despite my companion's admonishing kick beneath the table, I refused their invitation in the following execrable French. "Merci bien mais nous avons déja diné à l'auberge prés du lac."

My return from Dresden was as little agreeable as my journey thither had been. At one station we had a wait of three minutes which I overstayed, returning just in time to see the train, containing my luggage, glide like a dream beyond my sight. I pursued it with the ardour of a lover, but unfortunately a very slow train is not the best vehicle of expression for such zeal as possessed me. At each station (and the train stopped at all) I alighted—repeating loudly and earnestly the first clause only ("Ich bin hier") out of the three which a dictionary scramble in the train

had enabled me to put together—("*Ich bin hier, mein baggage nicht hier—Ich bitte sagen wo ist mein baggage*")—for be it understood that my immersion in Greek philosophy at Dresden had left me no time for the German language, and tenses and moods being quite beyond my powers, I had to return to the simplicity of a savage; but the shortness of the time so affected my memory that before I could pull myself together enough to recollect the other two sentences, an official (naturally misunderstanding my vain repetition) would roughly push me back into my compartment, determined that so dangerous a lunatic should not disturb the peace of his little world. At last, however, by a supreme effort, I managed to ask the whole of the riddle I was so anxious to have solved, and a delighted smile of comprehension lit up the hitherto clouded features of my audience. With gutteral zest they assured me that it was quite safe, and that if I behaved well and did as they bade me, that we, I and the luggage, would meet again some day—"Siebenuhr," they repeated many times, meaning a place—and, of course, I took it for a time (7 o'clock) which produced further complications. When, however, I at last beheld it, imprisoned in an iron cage, my relief was immense, and I felt like Mrs Micawber, determined that nothing should part us again. Having missed the boat, I was obliged to put up at the hotel, but being short of money, decided to dock dinner and breakfast, and forage economically for myself elsewhere. Elsewhere took the form of a shop filled with strange merchandize, and still stranger smells, where I purchased some cheap Dutch sausage, and having devoured it ravenously and in haste, began to repent almost immediately and at leisure, I was able to sympathize with the Frenchman on board ship, who, when asked if he had breakfasted, replied, "Au contraire!"

I once more laid myself on the altar of that merciless vanquisher, *mal-de-mer*, having first compared notes with one who had slept at my hotel, when we discovered that the items of our respective bills were identical, although he had fared sumptuously, and I had eaten Dutch sausage in lieu of dinner and breakfast. To fill my cup of sorrow to the brim I left my rug on the hotel bed, and had to travel not only famished, but cold. Never were the words of Juvenal

brought home to me more forcibly than when I landed at Harwich, hungry, shivering and blue, a fit object to keep the farmers' crops intact.

"Nil habet infelix paupertas, durius in se
Quan quod ridiculos homines facit."[1]

[1] "Grim poverty is then most hard to bear
When it exposes men to ridicule."

CHAPTER V

LANCASHIRE AND SUFFOLK

THIRTY-FIVE years ago, in my official infancy, the methods of Inspectorship were very different from what they are now.

The Inspector gave notice of his approaching advent on a certain date, and for weeks beforehand the children were stuffed and almost roasted—(no wonder they resembled trussed fowls)—the mistress had sleepless nights, the parson and the squire of the village were in a flutter of anxiety, for so much depended at that time on the verdict of Her Majesty's Inspector.

Woe betide the official himself if he kept the school waiting, for each succeeding ten minutes made the mistress more hysterical, the children more nervous; and if the minutes extended to hours, the parson and the squire became likewise infected by the malaise which reigned on such occasions, while newspaper articles and complaints to headquarters would probably help to curtail H.M.I.'s career in consequence of such delays.

Now there are two schools in the Wigan district almost identical in name, but eight miles apart, and one morning I arrived punctually at the wrong one.

The conveyance which had brought me thither had departed before I discovered my mistake. Those were not the days of motor-cars, and, as I stared gloomily at the landscape, there was not even a donkey-cart in sight.

After a short interval spent, on my part, in pessimistic conjectures and in efforts to pierce the horizon with my eye, I espied, about a mile away, an extraordinary-looking vehicle.

As it approached, I saw it was a narrow, black, and generally cruciform shaped construction, a sort of miniature transept dividing the driver's lofty seat from a species of closed wagonette in the rear.

The transept I afterwards discovered to be a case for a coffin.

As it came up to me, I first examined the rear where a closed window revealed six females with six handkerchiefs, each of whom uncovered one red eye to regard me curiously for the fraction of a minute before reburying it in the handkerchief again.

As they evinced no further interest in my intrusion, and gave no other sign of vitality, I ran forward to parley with the driver who would not for a second interrupt the jog-trot at which his horses were going.

Persuasion in the form of money induced him to let me mount the box and share a seat built for one, on the condition that I appeared to mourn.

I immediately whipped out a capacious handkerchief and imitated the ladies in the wagonette behind with such realism that he modified the condition by informing me that the personation need only take place when houses were about.

In the non-mourning intervals I had leisure to observe the weather-beaten face of the driver, and remarked that it looked as anxious as I felt. It was, he told me, the first time he had travelled that road with a shillibeer, for such was the name of this grim contrivance, and he had, in direct opposition to his employers' orders, risked a short cut, itself cut by an iron drawbridge over a canal, at the sixth of the eight miles he had to travel.

It was currently believed that the transept would be just too wide to pass through, and with every succeeding mile his nervous tension became more apparent, until at last his funereal solemnity gave entire place to it, and even when houses were thickest and my face, according to agreement, buried in the necessary handkerchief, his mutterings were quite audible.

"If it breaks off at the end I'm a ruined man, and if I turn back it'll be hours late."

He was indeed between the devil and the deep sea, for if he turned back, his dismissal was as certain as if the coffin were injured, for such a breach of punctuality on so grave an occasion would cause a scandal his employers would never forgive.

At length the bridge hove in sight, and my own no small

anxiety, on somewhat similar lines to his, was for the time forgotten in the excitement of watching the solution of his problem. It did not look as if he could possibly do it; the shillibeer and the bridge presented a problem of the most painful kind, usually met with in nightmares only, where the difficulty is generally waived by the sleeper awaking.

We crossed the bridge by a hair's-breadth, however, and for a moment the driver, and he is to be excused, forgot his rôle of mourner, while I was landed jubilant at my destination.

My reception was not cordial. I was two hours late, and my arrival in that sinister conveyance had been observed.

Current in most English villages is the old heathen tradition of a black coach driving through the night, which he or she who meets must die. A story had been going round of a certain child whose opinion of a ghost story, a very much diluted one, in a school-reader, I had tried to elicit.

"What is a spectre," I had asked, but the awe-stricken child would for some time give no reply, until at last, under pressure, I received the answer, "One as comes round to examine."

Subsequently it transpired, to the delight of the listening rector, that this unfortunate child imagined that the inspector passed his nights among the tombs, whence he issued in the daylight enveloped in a mist of blue schedules, on which her name would be engraved for her eternal weal or woe.

About the same time there had been a letter in the newspaper written by a slovenly Irish schoolmaster, whom I had attacked, which accused me of filling churchyards with little green graves.

This had been crowned by the characteristic letter of a newspaper correspondent which ran—"I do not know the inspector, I have never met him, but if he is as bad as he is painted—" upon which hypothesis his pen went to work until colour was submerged in ink.

With these unfortunate rumours of my own unfortunate self "vires" acquiring "eundo," one can imagine how an air of reality was lent them by my arrival in a shillibeer.

That morning was like a long and painful visit to a dentist, to be followed by a longer and more painful bill—the report.

Those schedule days are over, and everyone may be thankful for that; but the fact is, that not only comparisons, but those whose duty it is to make them, must always be more or less odious. A man looks at a church, but does not see it until he has looked at a variety of churches, just as an inspector does not visit one school, but many, which makes all the difference in his power of vision.

Another example of the effects of the schedule system on the teachers' nerves occurs to me this time in Suffolk.

It was with no ordinary sense of the importance of the occasion that I started for the village immortalized in "David Copperfield," hard by the beautiful Somerleyton Hall, which rose like a swan-song when Sir Morton Peto fell, and is said to have run Sandringham very close in the competition for the choice of a residence for H.M. the late King.

The reason of my anxiety being exceptional was that the rector's brother, an important official in the Education Department, might be influenced by the report he might get of me first hand at headquarters. I hoped sincerely that I might acquit myself successfully in my rôle of inspector, and trusted that no unpleasant hitches would occur during my visit.

My youthful mind occupied itself very seriously with the question of whether to wear a black or a white tie at dinner that evening at the rectory, and decided that I was to arrive three minutes early rather than late at the school on the following morning.

It was an instance of Greek meeting Greek. Just as I had thought every question out carefully beforehand, and was preoccupied with my own zest, so the mistress had primed her pupils for weeks previously to my advent, which she now awaited with nervous apprehension. She was intensely alive to the danger of a new Pharaoh under the schedule system, that Juggernaut then being at the height of its popularity.

It may be imagined that the meeting of two such overwrought neophytes, each supreme in its own power, however small in the world's eye, was by no means unattended with danger. The young woman was tall and of a quite uncommon beauty, but she possessed what is usually rare in one of her class, great self-restraint and a dignified reserve of manner.

Nothing was more trying in those terrible days of individual examination than the close proximity of a manager or teacher, who, with intermittent remarks, would interrupt the unfortunate H.M.I. in the following manner :—

" That child's grandmother had fits."

" This boy's aunt's mother died in a lunatic asylum."

" That scholar's mother had a shock before she was born."

" This boy knows it, it's only nervousness."

" This child wouldn't have been twelve to-day if you had come the day before yesterday."

When a child in answering a question had spluttered for some seconds between each word, the gratuitous information, " This child stammers," was generally forthcoming.

However, on the day in question I cleared myself of all such encumbrances by reminding the managers that when one is fishing a number of people is apt to frighten the fish away.

The dignified figure of the mistress constituted our sole audience ; and a grave silence was maintained by her.

In less than half an hour the children, like a mirror, had reflected the excellence of her work; scholar after scholar I waved aside with murmurs of satisfaction, and told myself that it was going to be one of those delightful mornings dear to the H.M.I. whose heart is in his work.

A sudden thud interrupted my absorption in Standard III., and, turning, I perceived a sea of small frightened faces eyeing me with startled horror and inquiry, while on the floor a pair of legs, encased in somewhat dirty white stockings, protruded from under the teacher's desk. Her fall had been more like the collapse of a tree than that of a human being, and there were no half measures about the way in which her head came in contact with the floor.

She had not only mistaken my grim relish for the Mephistolean smiles of an adverse critic, but had imagined that I was failing each of her pupils in turn.

Her last year's record of cent. per cent. of passes, and the recent three weeks of strain to reproduce it, had been too much for her. Would that I had perceived it sooner; as it was, I continued my work mechanically, as if to say, " it is nothing," for much depended on my keeping calm ; but never did a man's inner consciousness more feebly support a counterfeit of external composure.

The pupil-teachers rushed to her assistance and half-lifted, half-dragged her from the room, but before anything approaching calm had descended on the children's ruffled minds, the door was thrown violently open and a diminutive man, in an ill-cut frock-coat with baggy trousers of a funereal hue, rushed into our midst. "You have killed her! You have killed her!" he shouted; and, indeed, I began to wonder if I had. The children, their faces looking like rows of wind-cuffed flowers, turned a wide-eyed, terrified gaze on the ogre, who, in my person, stood before them.

That last dreadful hour punctuated every ten minutes by her father's violent incursions into our midst, he uttering always precisely the same four words, "You have killed her," set me wondering as to the possible advent of the police, the exact moment and manner of it, to put the finishing touch on the scene. But his final inroad was the worst. "She is dead," he declaimed dramatically. "I am a reporter, and if I have to bear the torch with my own hand, this crime shall be in people's mouths from one end of Britain to the other."

Small and even comic details mock us in moments of supreme anxiety, and I, worried as I was, could not help wondering whether those trousers, which seemed to crease as if there were no knees inside, could possibly conceal powers of perambulation equal to that herculean task. I proceeded mechanically with the examinations, seeing in fancy on the wall opposite, not "Mene Mene Tekel Upharsin," but an enormous placard whose counterpart I felt certain would be all over England on the morrow, and which read like this—

"FATAL RESULTS OF A SCHOOL INSPECTION.
BRUTAL OFFICIAL.
DISTRACTED PARENT."

At the rectory, where the news had preceded me, the rector did not join us at lunch; for, he having recently had a stroke of paralysis, they feared the shock that the story of so unfortunate an occurrence might give him.

The perturbed faces at the luncheon table received my explanations with a "qui s'excuse s'accuse" expression, which was the last straw on a mind that by this time had a hump as large as any camel's, and I began to count the moments

before I could get home, embrace my young wife, and prepare for the worst.

It was not until the next day, after a sleepless night, that we received the welcome news of the mistress' possible recovery. The relief! "He jests at scars, who never felt a wound"; but I afterwards received letters from the young woman and her father, very fully and penitently apologizing for their foolishness, which had been caused, they said, by misapprehension.

CHAPTER VI

LOWESTOFT

Oh Lowestoft! Your pier bathed in an atmosphere of delicious summer dreaminess, the distant music of a band, the sunlit red-brown sails of trawlers, your harbour's sleeping water which flanks you, oh you fisherman's Venice, on the one side; while on the other, the masts of many boats and ships wing the air, and such air, and the towering pinnacles of hotels, presenting to the imaginative eye the illusion of fairy palaces, all these, and much besides, start one wondering why the crowds that flock each summer to your shores are not even yet more dense than they are—like those of comparatively languid southern watering-places.

Queen! To whom I, in striving to save your beautiful children from two evils, which might almost be called partial suffocation by land and total suffocation by water, have, in my small way, given "of my life," as the poet Swinburne did to Mary Queen of Scots, when he wrote:—

> "Queen, once of Scots, but ever of ours,
> Whose sires brought forth for you
> Their lives to strew your path like flowers."

And, by the way, the chief of those sires was more directly mine than his.

Even her rival, Yarmouth, must yield Lowestoft at least one point.

Lowestoft's pleasure stream flows through its thriving industry. At Yarmouth, its work is from its pleasure, "a thing apart"; and what peace those still, cool Lowestoft harbour waters, with their smooth-gliding craft, can speak!

Even Dickens, who immortalized Yarmouth, used to stay at Somerleyton Hall with Sir Morton Peto, whose love for the neighbouring Lowestoft brought even that millionaire to ruin.

And yet, let not advancing years be mistaken for disloyalty, if, as I step over pavements where signs of feminine vanity may be found, even as early as June, I miss the softer carpeted Thorpe, near Leiston. The maram grasses there, by wooing the restless sand to the stability of stronger soil, convey a more wholesome lesson on the racket of modern life; while the rest-harrow and bed-straw, whose very names breathe truest recreation, as they hotly under one's feet convert shifting barrenness to scented pleasure for others, whisper a sovereign remedy for the heartlessness that must at times be met with in a world where the only unchanging thing seems to be change—fickleness too often treading heavily on former friends. Sweet, lowly Thorpe! What strand can better teach mankind—

"To weigh against a grain of sand the glories of a throne."

The potency of Lowestoft air is best seen in the physique of the men.

Mr Gladstone, when staying at Corton with Mr Colman, who should not by the way allow that palatial residence of his to resemble so curiously a cruet-stand, was very much struck by their height and corresponding breadth of stature. "I shuddered," said he, "to think that the autumn days were drawing in so rapidly, until I discovered that this twilight was but the shadow of a man walking in front of me."

There was rather an amusing story told at one time by a friend of Mrs Gladstone concerning Mr Gladstone's night-shirt, in which he used, it seems, to tie knots that he might remember points for his speech. Handkerchiefs we know frequently serve such a purpose, but a night-shirt thus turned to account is a distinctly novel idea.

At the time of the Irish Church Bill, his own not being voluminous enough to accommodate the number of points, namely knots, of which his speech had need, his wife's night-dress was brought into requisition, when, as she told her friend, she thought it was high time to send for the doctor, so many knots being an outward and visible sign of an inward and too rapid mental pace.

Nowhere has there been a fiercer fight to maintain the voluntary system of schools than at Lowestoft.

In a memorandum designed to stay the hand of the Board of Education, I pleaded for this town, as viewed from the school point of view, explaining that the Erosion and the Hibernation from which it suffers, impoverish it yearly, while clumsy methods in the case of the former, and popular prejudice in the case of the latter, do not help to mend matters.

If people knew how mild the winters on this lightland-strip, within sight and sound of the sea, really are, it would be equally popular as a winter as it is as a summer residence and resort.

Alas! Moses' experience with the Hebrews has had frequent reproductions right down to this present age. I tried hard to help the people, suggesting comparatively trivial reforms to secure the permanence of their schools, but they would not listen to me. "Wilt thou slay us as thou didst the Egyptians (Ipswich)?" was the tenor of their protest, which resulted in a magical transformation of Black Holes of Calcutta into Nabob's palaces, huge towering board-school structures, followed, however, by the paralysis usually attendant on the thrusting of municipal hands into other people's pockets.

At the Rev. ——'s, by Lowestoft, whose rectory was built on a cliff, I have spent many delightful hours in a low-ceilinged, bay-windowed guest chamber overhanging the sea, where, save for the lack of motion, one could imagine oneself in the cabin of a ship, but which, alas, since then has been swallowed by the syren waves that lullabied so sweetly through the night and enchanted one's eyes by day.

The rector who, some forty years before the time of which I write, had joined the Agapemone, a curious sect, which dissolved within a year of its formation, but has since, I believe, recrystallized, had carried off from the midst of the Agapemonites as his wife, a lady, twenty years his senior, but blessed with affluence, when we imagine the affection ceased to be platonic.

The voluntary schools were in the throes of their death struggle when I appeared on the scene, and false rumour, the forerunner of reasonable reform, had of course preceded me; and, on my arrival, I found the master of the house, a stalwart Welshman, his aged wife, and a novel kind of tame cat in the shape of an evangelist, whose red, foxy face, full of angry spots, did not prepossess one in his favour. It so happened that,

having been introduced with preternatural pomp and ceremony as Her Majesty's Inspector—a title which in this and other cases had been often wrongly conferred on assistants and sub-inspectors—the old lady did not know my name. Their obvious anxiety to please was very comic and would have flattered my *amour propre* had I not been aware that a matter of £300 depended on my visit.

All went well until we reached the dining-room where, after the long grace delivered by the rector, and listened to with almost audible appreciation by the evangelist, the old lady, who, although blind, had retained her other faculties to a marvellous degree, passed her right hand over my face slowly from my forehead down to my chin, exclaiming with enthusiasm, "Oh, it's Mr Ainsworth after all: *not* that horrid Mr Swinburne! I am so glad." Now Mr Ainsworth was at that time my assistant, whose name had been used by the newspapers as the necessary foil to the darkness of my deeds. The rector's face became livid with rage, and, but for the presence of the evangelist and H.M.I., his wife, I fancy, would have spent a *mauvais quart d'heure*. As it was, he banged his fist on the table until the glasses danced, declaring he would wash his hands of everything for "if a man's own household, etc., what could that man do?"

The poor old lady, who had been worked upon by her husband and the evangelist to believe that Antichrist had come, I being his representative, collapsed entirely, and the sight of her trouble would have touched a harder heart than mine. I talked myself hoarse to cover her retreat, explaining that Providence alone could have vouchsafed the aforegoing accident, which would impell me to let the scales turn as far as possible in their favour, whatever my own private prejudices might happen to be.

The evangelist, however, interrupted me with fact and question.

"You are husky, sir-r-r! Are you often so? Take carre," he warned me, instancing forthwith several cases of huskiness which had been followed by a subsequent and speedy dissolution of mind and body, and I strongly suspect that his wish was father to this thought.

In passing all the small but amusing events in review which occurred during my stay with these worthy people,

family prayers, or rather their method of conducting them, certainly win an easy first.

When England, Lowestoft, Germany, and the adjoining parish, which, being ritualistic, had in their opinion great need of intercession on its behalf, had been disposed of, I suddenly awoke to the startling fact that I was the subject, or rather the *pièce de résistance,* of their prayers, and furthermore, during the hymn, "For you I am praying," which concluded this novel form of family prayers, all eyes, and especially the evangelist's, were fixed on me; but the middle-aged cook, the possessor of a really beautiful voice, exhibited a fervour and devotion that would have set a revival meeting into full hysterical swing.

Some years later, on her mistress' death, she disappeared, and with her disappeared much of the silver and all the old lady's linen.

CHAPTER VII

THE CLERGY

IMMEDIATELY after my appointment I was married by Bishop Mackerness to Miss Blomfield, the only daughter of the late Rev. J. C. Blomfield, Hon. Canon of Christ Church, Oxford. On leaving Oxford my friends and pupils, amongst whom were Lord Warwick, G. Baird, J. Baird, the Hon. Sydney Herbert, H. W. Campbell, J. Hanbury, Reginald Brooke, and H. W. Kemble, had given me as a parting gift some plate and a dressing-bag. The size of the crest on the fittings of the bag amused Bishop Mackerness, who wondered if the country rectories where I should sleep, when fulfilling my duties as H.M.I., would be large enough to contain it.

After the honeymoon we settled at Wigan in Lancashire, where we stayed four years, until leave for my removal to Suffolk was kindly granted on account of my wife's health.

A very terrible colliery explosion I witnessed in June 1878 impressed me so much that I wrote an account of it to the *Times*. There are many living who probably remember the tragedy in question, or may be interested to have it recalled to their memory :—

"At a time when the riotous behaviour of some of the men of Lancashire has shocked the community, I cannot resist calling the attention of your readers to points of character of a far more encouraging description which I saw in the crowd around the pit's mouth on Friday evening last.

"It was about three hours after the 30 volunteers went down. A single constable had no difficulty in keeping back at a distance of some 20 yards from the mouth of the pit a dense crowd, silent, motionless, and respectful. For those coming and going to and from the pit a way was as easily made, which closed up so compactly again as to cause wonder how it was ever made. Not a sound, not a murmur from

that sea of white, upturned faces; something of resignation, something of despair in the bulk of them, and bloodshot eyes and haggard cheeks telling the story of their mute lips. Could it be fear that paralysed them into such rigid government of feelings—such stern determination to cause no confusion or interruption among the little group round the pit-mouth, such discipline, such reverence for authority, and withal a gentleness and kindness that, coming from their sorrow-stricken faces, wrung one's heart to see? Was it a panic's spell that bound them there hour after hour, without an attempt to burst through and see for themselves what could be done for their brothers, husbands, sons, or fathers in that pit? No. There was little of terror in the fierce eagerness of the roar that thundered from a hundred deep throats or the yearning desire of a hundred outstretched hands, as though it was the one darling wish of their lives when a request was made for volunteers to fill the places of those who were being carted away, through their midst, insensible.

"All this and much besides—especially the respectful dignity with which the men stepped into their places in the cage to be lowered—must have been seen to realize with what a majesty these colliers face a cold-blooded death in living tombs.

"Alas! one had not ridden four miles from the scene before it became manifest that the appalling news had swept through the country and left it almost indifferent. The pigeon, the dog, the drinking and swearing had already resumed their sway, and the bitter reflection suggested itself, What a people this might be if the crust of short-sighted folly and ignorance could be broken through and the latent splendour of their character brought to light!"

A few days later I was surprised to see, under the heading —"Lord Derby and Bishop Fraser on the Disaster"—my own name in the *Times*, and found that at a meeting attended by Lord Derby, with Bishop Fraser in the chair, the latter, in speaking of the disaster, had quoted my letter in the following words:—

"I say that, because yesterday I was reading a touching letter in the *Times* newspaper by Mr Swinburne, in which

he described the scene at the pit's mouth, the orderly conduct of the men and women, and the devoted courage of those who volunteered to go into the pit; and then, he says, it is a sad thing, going four miles away from the scene, to find the population as indifferent, with their pigeons and dogs, and with their drinking and swearing, as if nothing of the kind had happened. We lament that, and justly, and we should be wrong if we did not do everything we can to bring about a better state of things—less drinking and swearing and gambling; for I don't care so much about the pigeons and dogs as about the gambling associated with them. I don't think the love of an animal, whether a bird or a quadruped, is altogether an unfavourable feature in a collier's character, or in any other man's character."

And the Rev. H. Siddall wrote :—

"Well were some of their duties described last Tuesday by Mr Swinburne in words to him (the preacher) and in a letter to the *Times* newspaper, which had been copied into the local papers."

The illiterate and the governed classes are often accused of unpunctuality and of an inability to keep to the subject in hand. Whenever such accusations are made, remembering a certain bishop who was by no means illiterate, and who would never have agreed to the fact that he himself was governed, and governed with the unswerving sway of Home Rule, I am tempted to smile. On one occasion, when introducing a deputation, he took up three-quarters of the hour allotted to that person whom people had come from miles to hear. Though hackneyed, the sailor's rebuke to prolixity will always point a moral if it cannot adorn a tale.

The subject is General Gordon, and the preacher, leaning well over his pulpit as he gazes at his audience on the right, inquires sepulchrally, "Shall we place him among the archangels mibretheren?"

"No, we will not place him among the archangels."

Then turning to his congregation on the left, "Shall we place him among the angels?"

"No, we will not place him among the angels."

"Shall we place him among——"

"He can have my place—I'm—going," remarks a sailor in the front pew, suiting his action to the words.

Mais revenons à nos moutons, or rather the bishop. I myself once heard him speak at a school opening, and can well imagine how the hour of that unfortunate deputation was put to flight by the persistence of the episcopal tongue.

His lordship was there to speak on Education, but he opened the meeting by referring to his sisters in Christ. "My sisters in Christ, blessed with affluence, in my old parish," he told us, always complimented him on one characteristic —here a digression occurred, to contest the views expressed by certain smiles among his audience, that the expression "sisters in Christ" was open to objections. The next digression went to prove that the opinion of his "sisters in Christ blessed with affluence" curiously coincided with the rougher material, not so blessed, to whom it had been his privilege to minister in mining districts, and that characteristic was—breathless anxiety on the part of his audience to hear it—but several more digressions ensued before our curiosity was allayed, and we learnt that his sisters in Christ always complimented him on "going straight to the point," that was to say to the root of the matter, and what was the matter before them, why, "Education."

Education, he informed us, was a Latin word—yet one more digression to prove the utility of the study of dead languages. This digression became multiplied in the shape of reasons why his audience, chiefly fisherfolk, should not be discouraged if they did not understand Latin, and were not thus in a position to be as accurate as his lordship, and to prove his accuracy he proceeded to explain to them what that word education meant. "Education comes from *educo*, a Latin word meaning, I build up."[1]

Anent punctuality, the following story was related to me

[1] *Educo* means "I draw out"; instruction means "building up." It was of this bishop that one of his leading clergymen remarked when a conference had been convened to consider means to strengthen the episcopal hands, "It's his head you want to strengthen." Such want of scholarship almost makes one long for the learned classical moralist bishops of the Georgian Apathy period—one of whom is said to have remarked to a clergyman in his diocese, "Not a bad sermon—but where on earth did you get that about our righteousness being like 'filthy rags.' I didn't like that at all!"

of a similar bishop who also never knew when to stop discoursing, and could not realise that in speaking, as well as generally, the best whisky can be spoilt by too much water.

He had a double engagement on the same afternoon, the subsequent one being to meet the county at a garden party.

Carriage after carriage rolled up the long drive across the park during the afternoon, but not one of them contained a bishop.

At 6 P.M., however, the hostess rushed around informing her guests that he had arrived.

"But when and how?" they inquired.

"Oh, he came in by the back way on principle! He travels third on principle! He'll be out in a few minutes—do wait!"

They waited in vain, for all that was seen and heard of him was an arm shaking an evening shirt out of a window that overlooked the terrace, and a loud voice—apparently addressed to the hostess, "wants airing," for these were his sole contribution to the gaiety of the afternoon.

The window and the incident were then closed, which recalls the story of that unpunctual man, who, arriving late at a meeting, was astonished to have his apologies confronted with the accusation.

"You have robbed us of an hour of our time."

"An hour!" he exclaimed indignantly, "but I'm only five minutes late!"

"There are twelve of us, and we've each lost five minutes," was the incontrovertible reply.

But the poorest stick can carry flame, and one of the strongest proofs of the truth of Christianity is its survival of the well-meant efforts of some of its friends—especially commentators.

I knew a bishop who at an advanced age had been, so to speak, pitchforked into the purple by a premier who had been prevailed upon by feminine entreaty—Non vi, sed sæpe cadendo. Years after, when the air was warm with the question, "When will our bishop retire," the said prelate visited for the first time a well-known country rector, who by his zeal and benevolence had won the hearts of his parishioners. He had likewise spent very lavishly of his private means on church and schools, and his garden, a

wilderness when he came, now blossomed like the rose. From his carriage window the bishop began, "Afraid I am late—hate these family livings—you've a beautiful place here. Don't you think it's time that another should enjoy it, wouldn't it be better for your people?" then abruptly—

"Married?"

"No, my lord."

"Good, then let's go straight to the church."

It is curious to remark that the suggestion of retirement was mooted by the bishop to a man who was twenty years his junior.

In the chancel, alone with the rector, his lordship prays aloud. His companion's nerves become somewhat tranquillized as the prayer proceeds, until, by an unexpected turn, it intimates that the time has come for "the Spirit of the Lord to permit his brother to entertain the idea of making way for a successor."

The rector, his ears snared, as it were, by the bishop's tongue, listened in painful bewilderment until the words, "And that not my brother only, but I too, should do my duty," distracted him by the thought, "Now he's alluding to his own retirement." However, the bishop continued, "Put it into my heart to find him——"

"Dear old chap," reflects the listener, "how I wronged him, he wants to give me a better living still"—a reflection cut short by the prayer's denouement—"to find him—as I am bound to—A Good Successor!"

The rector, whose chief crime in the bishop's eyes consisted in the fact of his keeping a butler, determined after this to keep not only the butler but his living as well.

It was the same prelate—as earnest, sincere, and devoted a clergyman as ever breathed, but not, oh! not a bishop—who once told his congregation that England was "an island entirely surrounded by water." I only wish there were government inspectors of sermons and services. There is an uproar if either show zeal in one direction; but there is no one to keep an eye on them when they err in the other direction—and so "Slackers" escape scot free.

I remember listening to the discourse of one divine, which, but for its undue length, was irreproachable—exhorting to action rather than emotion—to behaviour in preference to

theory. "Above all, I beseech you, my dear people, to control the tongue;" and then, like a thunderbolt from a cloudless sky, "I see you, sir" (Was it me? my hand had just stolen in search of my watch)—"I have mine here" (regarding it) "and I end." And so also nearly did the pulpit stair and chancel rail, neither of which had been built for the step and hand of heavy men in heavy dudgeon. The risen congregation had only just warmed into "Bring forth the royal diadem and kerrown er Him, kerrown er Him," etc., and were finishing the first verse with an ascending rapture that almost removed the roof, when from the chancel a stentorian voice roared—"Last verse."

The revenge, a sudden inspiration, was immediately put into action, and just as we had been docked of the closing sentences of his sermon, so was the congregation deprived of the last five verses of its hymn. Who at the end of a hard day into which extra work had generously been put, would not have felt, as the Suffolk folk say, "whully riled" at so visible a lack of appreciation on the part of his audience.

A dangerous beginning for a fresh sentence from the mouth of long-winded preachers are the words "And now." At the Tower Church, where a weary congregation had been listening to a deputation, who passed all limits in the matter of time, the words "and now" used by him, as a pause to cover want of breath, were seized upon by the rector, to liberate himself and his parishioners from the thraldom of a voice under which they had been for some time chafing. He sprang to his feet, and promptly gave out the hymn, "Art thou weary, art thou languid, art thou sore distrest?" to the intense delight of the congregation, whose dismay may be imagined when the deputation, the final verse sung, returned to his sermon with renewed vigour.

The most impressive sermon I ever heard was preached by a clergyman on his ninetieth birthday. He had of later years developed an anti-papal craze, and his text was, "Commune with your own hearts in your chamber and be still." The sight of that old man with one leg in the grave was more suggestive of what we had all to come to than the most eloquent tirade on death could ever have been. "My brethren, in these words—I can't read what I've got here—these modern new-fangled blinds, Mr Churchwarden, will you

please——" A number of willing hands attacked the said blinds. "There, now—no, I can't see, it's the windows, they're so different nowadays—the afternoons get so dark" —another pause, then, "Mr Churchwarden, will you light the candles?" Again the eager acquiescence to fulfil his request, an eagerness which conveyed a deeper sympathy than words could ever express. "There, now"—another painful silence, then piteously, "It's no good, I can't do it, I can't—read—my own—writing, but my brethren, no matter what the text. It's Antichrist—so long as there's a Pope, there's darkness"—and once on his pet hobby his mind hobbled along the beaten track of narrow, though popular prejudice for the space of some three-quarters of an hour.

I left that church more deeply impressed by what I had there seen and heard than by the oratory of Wilberforce, Bishop of Oxford, in his prime, or by the subtly penetrating thought contained in Canon Liddon's 'Varsity Sermons. For the highest flight of eloquence could not have demonstrated so clearly the realism of death as did the spectacle of that poor old man making so brave a fight against infirmities that must overtake us all, do we but live long enough. And after all, the dear old man's departure from his text was nothing like so marked as that of a clergyman recently heard, who, on the words, "Not every one that *saith* unto me Lord, Lord," etc., based a violent attack upon those who would urge that faith must be justified by something more than words. Passive belief, he argued, was action of the highest kind!

At the opening of the Mid-Suffolk Railway, the Duke of Cambridge aroused the sympathy of his audience in a similar manner. His somewhat halting speech was punctuated at intervals by the obstinate remark, "I wont give in," addressed as it were to some foe invisible. The crowd, filled with admiration for his grit and courage, cheered him to the echo as, had it been feasible, the congregation of the brave old parson would have liked to cheer him.

Suffolk, once famed for piety, to which the ruins of its abbeys still testify, is not a shining example of churchmanship to-day. The village clerk who recently ejected from the church a visitor engaged in prayer, alone, on a week day, and, while locking the door, remarked, "This sort of thing

won't do, I turned out a couple of lovers only last Friday," was a representative instance. In 1880 our own parish was, I should say, one of the worst on record.

A species of barrel organ, limited as to its number of tunes, the squealing of a solitary child, and the bellow of a young labourer formed the choir in the church. The bellow and the choir being synonymous, whenever the broad shoulders of the young labourer disappeared behind the organ for which he acted as blower, the choir for the time being ceased to exist. The congregation consisted of about twelve people, and in two years had had about forty different clergymen, for the vicar sojourned in other parts, leaving a locum to fulfil his duties. One of the worst of these itinerant divines, who were in the habit of arriving with small black bags, brought tears to the eyes of his hearers by a sermon he preached on the "triple test of true discipleship, namely, self-surrender, self-sacrifice, and self-control," beseeching us to quit the comfortable brotherhood of the indifferent, and practise what he preached. During the ensuing week he was carried home in a wheelbarrow from the village inn.

The vicar, when in residence, regaled us on sermons which were delivered in little jerky sentences that recalled Anglo-Saxon poetry, and suggested the jingle of a tune. I once heard him preach on a Harvest Thanksgiving day, and remember the appropriate and cheerful "wind-up" of his sermon. It was delivered in the following manner. Whether he and the organ suffered from the same complaint I cannot say, but the length of his sentences suggested want of breath :—

"We-buried-here
Mrs-Jones-last-week
Mrs-Thomas-the-week-before
A-baby-before-that
Was-carried-to-his
Eternal-Home
By-Bronchitis
And-with-the-wear-and-tear
Of-the-modern-rush
Who-knows
Whose-turn-next?"

Here he seemed by a gesture of his hand to indicate that I, who looked haggard after a hard week's work, might

hope to have the next turn, and with these comforting reflections he concluded his Harvest Thanksgiving sermon; for to him Christianity, which is nothing if not life, was nothing if not death.

The acting clerk's well-meant efforts to correct, by painfully exaggerated slowness in the responses, which he practically monopolised, the rapidity of the vicar's delivery, served only to heighten by contrast the absurdity of the situation :—

" The-Lord-is-my-shepherd-I-shall-not-want."

Acting clerk.—" He—mak—eth—me—to—lie—down," etc.

Still more painful was the response.

" We—be—seech—thee—to—hear—US, good—Lord."

As if he would publicly protest—

" No one would expect the vicar's delivery to be heard —even by a merciful Creator."

And an extract from another of his curious and jingling discourses ran something like this :—

" The-winter-is-gone
The-birds-are-singing
We-Protestants-are-the-birds
And-with-Christian-joy
At-the-thought-of-death
We'll-not-chatter-like-swallows
Nor-chirrup-like-sparrows
But-we'll-warble-like-nightingales."

Remembering the organ-blower's bellow, which recalled a bull rather than a nightingale, I looked round the church, expecting to surprise a smile on at least one or two of the faces there. I beheld, however, countenances draped in a decent gravity which somehow reminded one of sheep penned in hurdles and facing one another, whose guttural bleatings, their A-MENS resembled

I still recollect that hymn, " O God, our help in ages past," and the blower's rendering of the third and fourth lines— " Our refuge from the stormy blast, and our eternal home " —resolving itself into " fuge from—my blast—he tarn "— which mocked my irritated nerves with the sentence, " He turns my blowing to fugues." Even the screamer-donna occasionally met with in the mixed choir of a village would have been music to this !

It was a respite to be spared some of his bellow, and to have time in the awful slowness to pray that the help promised in the hymn might be vouchsafed to this miserable church ; and on one occasion, meeting the dissenting minister, an exceptionally good old man, I congratulated him on the roaring business he must be doing. " No, no," he replied regretfully ; " empty church spells empty chapel."

The altar could boast of a solitary light in the shape of a bedroom candlestick, to which the vicar's surplice seemed a fitting complement, for it suggested nothing more agreeable than a voluminous but dirty night-shirt. On the days when there was a celebration of Holy Communion his wife would post herself inside the altar rails. Was it in order that she might forestall all precedence of herself ? For, being a colonel's daughter, she considered her position unique, and indeed on such occasions it truly was.

The same gifted vicar was very fond of preaching on the Judgment Day, and in one thrilling portion of this well-known sermon he would, by a noble gesture of his arm, separate his flock :—

" This-side-the-sheep."

" That-side-the-goats."

I, who, as the squire was then non-resident, occupied the chief seat, being indicated by a special finger, as if not only a goat, but the goats' ringleader had been descried. On one such occasion, when a collection was made for the choir, I, after asking where the choir was, left the church, and did not re-enter it until twenty years had elapsed. At the expiration of that lengthy period, what was my amazement on re-entering the church to hear the very identical sermon re-delivered !

My humble efforts to improve the unfortunate condition of religious affairs here—or in plain English, to save the parishioners from a death to which ordinary death is a trifle, were rewarded by a letter from the vicar, of which the following is an extract, which is printed, as he would have *said* it —for of course it was written in the usual way, only the jingle could not be shaken off.

" Weshouldbe
Veryglad
Toseeyou

LikePaul
FightingforGod
Insteadof
LikeSaulofTarsus
FightingagainstHim," And so on, ending with :—

" Wehavejoyandpeace
Inbelieving
Pardonforsin
Strengthfromonhigh
Andwelookforacrown
Thatfadethnotaway

Believe me
Yrs truly,"

The two churchwardens and others in the parish petitioned me to conduct a deputation to the bishop; but alas! on its arrival at the palace, the polished mahogany furniture and the butler's equally polished face had the same effect on its members as Solomon's glory is said to have had upon the Queen of Sheba, " And there was no more spirit in them."

" Pray be seated, gentlemen," said Bishop Pelham with that urbanity which was all his own.

" Certainly, my lord "—still, however, standing.

He (chillingly) " May I ask what you are here for ? "

" We didn't want to come, my lord, we'd better be gittin' back." What did I sigh comin' along ? Ain't we robbin' a man of his vittals."

No captain was ever deserted more completely by his men, and so the deputation melted into a *tête-à-tête* between the bishop and myself. Descanting on the snares of the great Poacher,[1] the sleep of God's keeper, etc., I endeavoured to do justice to the hopeless state of religion in a parish where the parson had, so to speak, feathered his nest with an apathy of his own growing: to which the bishop replied with that calm air of seeming indifference, so characteristic of great

[1] Upon my suggesting to our squire's kind-hearted father some time after when he came into residence that he should visit the school, he laughed, " What ? " he said, " go and hear the little poachers sing." But he went.

ecclesiastics when discussing Church matters with laymen, and of physicians, when diseases are brought on the tapis by those uninitiated in the art of Æsculapius.

"I can," he said, "only offer you the comfort of Christianity by reminding you that the more you are tried the greater will be your reward, the greater your growth in that saintly virtue, patience. I will," he went on to say, "do all I can for you, which I am afraid is *nil*, but be of good cheer, and God bless you," with which words the interview terminated. At length, however, after much trumpeting and thanks to our energetic archdeacon and Captain Vernon Wentworth, the new squire, our Jericho fell, and the parishioners could at last attend their own church and rejoice in a pleasant and orderly service.

But the chief cause of many of these clerical "troubles" is not far to seek. The landed gentry of the sixteenth century, tiring of pilgrimage, took to grim pillage instead. Lay tithes tell their own sad tale. I knew a country vicar who "drew" £50 a year, and who, when delivering the funeral sermon for the late King Edward VII., chose for his text: "Cut it down, why cumbereth it the ground," and for the appointed canticle insisted on substituting, "Oh be joyful in the Lord, all ye lands," blissfully unconscious of any incongruity. But there was method in his madness when, addressing a distinguished guest at the squire's dinner-party, in an awkward pause he said, "You are of one of the chiefs of the admirals—sir—you have been to sea, I suppose."

The days, however, have passed away when churches were closed for repairs to the porch during the Newmarket races, and when clerks warned visiting clergymen that they must preach from the reading desk as the turkey was sitting in the pulpit.

But there were some magnificent specimens of parson-men in those past times. Who, for instance, having known him could ever forget Tom French of Thrandeston? That splendid sportsman, an old "blue," used, when over ninety years of age, to entertain me with a cordiality that baffles description, and wandering in his lovely gardens, one could not help comparing his tall straight figure with the magnificent fir and the gaunt church tower, both so old and yet so strong, which were the principal features of his home.

The clerical immigrants from town occasionally find something in their country brethren at which to cavil, as the Lancashire parson who bemoaned the dulness of his life, because not one of his clerical neighbours "cared a pin for 'ebrew or the 'igher criticism."

I remember one parson who could have filled a book by his personality alone. He was an enthusiastic astronomer, and was chosen to send the first telephone message from his own village The telephone at its inauguration impressed the unlettered public very much as magic had in days of yore, and two crowded meetings were held simultaneously, one at his village and the other at the neighbouring town. His mind ever intent on astronomy, he whispered through the 'phone in dulcet accents:—

"Will you come and look at the stars with me to-night?"

After a breathless silence, a clear female voice was heard to cap his question with another.

"How old are you?" it asked.

The crowd of listeners was convulsed with laughter.

In spite of Dickens and Thackeray's ridicule of that form of religious hypocrisy termed cant, its cult is still in vogue. I have had the misfortune to meet some of its votaries in the form of school managers. One clergyman, not content with enclosing tracts in his official letters to me, sent the said form of literature to Whitehall, entertaining the hope no doubt of being, under the Providence of God, the instrument to produce a mighty upheaval in what seemed to him the stronghold of infidelity. Once, when I congratulated him on having such fine weather for his inspection, he replied, "You know the secret—we make it a matter of prayer."

A worldling overhearing this remark, suggested that some neighbouring farm might be badly wanting rain; and a parson and his sister who lived near, after calling on the distributor of tracts, told me that they were startled by the appearance of the maid who opened the door to them, for a more slovenly and dishevelled-looking servant they had never seen. By the way, servants, like gardens, are to the visitor what the tongues of his patients are to the doctor. They show the state of the interior. One of the first remarks their hostess, who had of course been peeping over the banister on their arrival and had observed their astonish-

ment, made, was, "You were struck with our new domestic"?

"Well, yes."

"How difficult it is to get servants."

They admitted this to be a fact.

"The explanation in our case is simple; we make it a subject of prayer."

The visitors told me how difficult they found it to suppress their mirth until they were at a safe distance from the vicarage door, when the brother said, "The selection of servants, my dear, is clearly not intended as a subject for prayer."

After the same people had, "in God's providence," been prayerfully guided to an excellent teacher—I had to withhold the Geography Grant.

"Your Report," he wrote, "was sadly too discouraging, however, we look higher.

"Yrs. Sincerely, etc.
1 Peter ii., yea i. and ii."

I advised him by all means to appeal to the Board of Education, whereupon he, having first appealed unsuccessfully in that quarter, reminded me in another letter, "that there is a yet higher tribunal than the Education Department," etc. No appeal, however on his part to that still higher tribunal appears to have procured him the Geography Grant.

Apropos of cant, a story, oft told by an old friend, a colonel of Newmarket fame, recurs to me.

Betty Martin, an old woman who was never tired of holding forth on the importance of being "ready for the comin' o' the Lord," and especially to the young, who had not yet had their fill of this planet as she might be supposed to have had, was frightened late one night by prolonged knocking at her door

"Oo's there?" she inquired in shrill cracked accents.

"It's the Lord come to fetch Betty Martin," a deep male voice replied.

"She don't live 'ere, she live next doughr," came the swift response, to the intense amusement of the young men who had improvised the hoax.

The late Canon Raren of Fressingfield, whose talents and charms endeared him to all who had the privilege of knowing him, told me the following :—

First Villager.—I harn't had so much money from the Wicarage lately.

Second Villager.—Ha' you tried the 'arly sarvice ?

One has, in exercising the functions of an H.M.I., a great deal to do with the clergy, and I should like to say at the close of this chapter, which, if not a pæan of praise, yet grossly wrongs me if it betrays anything like an anti-clerical animus, that in all schemes for the public good I have ever found the parson their readiest abettor. The squire is often absent, and, if in residence, is more frequently than not, so to speak, hobbled by his tenant farmers' opinions, which are not as a rule in favour of education. And so the parson is the only available man possessed of the two qualifications which to me seem necessary in overlooking educational schemes, a 'varsity education and a certain amount of leisure.

In a village, if cricket were started, and a member of the M.C.C. happened to reside there, would he be excluded from the committee and the field ? One of my saddest experiences has been to see the exodus from the schools of those men who, by their unselfish energy and careful husbanding of the public resources, should by rights have been in the vanguard of their management.

In the first managers' meeting after the Kenyon-Slaney clause had passed, in 1902, a parson of my acquaintance, a High Churchman, took the bull by the horns.

" I've always," he said, " taken the religious instruction at considerable inconvenience to myself, but if you wish it, I'll stay at home and devote the time to my own affairs."

There was a long silence in the room. At length the village publican rose slowly to his feet.

" Oi doan't see, as that there Reverend can doo mooch 'arm [1] in two and a half hours a week, let 'im goo on, I ssay," and the vote was carried unanimously. Of course I *have* known a 'varsity man to be as obstinate an enemy to progress as any farmer—but it is quite exceptional.

[1] This expression from Suffolk lips conveys the highest praise.

One charmingly courteous old parson, on my first visit to his school, seized my arm and began walking me round and round the school while he talked in accents of the most exquisite politeness.

"Before you enter, Mr Inspector, *may* I say one word?

"You see you are a stranger: a little explanation must help you. We have an excellent mistress, an excellent structure, apparatus perfect, everything is in fact perfect, but there's one thing I think you ought to know—we had a very bad report last year," etc., etc., etc.

Behind a flawless courtesy, as invulnerable as a coat of mail, he harboured the most obstinate prejudices against innovations or improvements of any kind After a recommendation of some scheme or other on my part with a view to progress, he replied: "I thought as H.M.I. you should know that the committee, who are most grateful to you, have decided by a large majority, indeed, I may say unanimously, never to take up any extra subjects, nor support night schools, nor do we intend doing anything different to what we have hitherto done," and so on.

The late Rector of Bawdsey, was intensely vital, and when well over ninety he took the whole duty of Bawdsey as well as that of a parish some miles distant from the one in which he lived. He had had three wives, and having heard of the curious epitaphs to be seen on their tombs, I visited the churchyard one evening shortly after his death. As I entered the churchyard, a lady with keys in her hand was on the point of leaving it, but she very kindly unlocked the door for me

The inscription in the church ran as follows :—

CATHERINE MARY JOSEPHINE

(*née* STEWART)

LAST REPRESENTATIVE OF THE

STEWARTS OF BALLY WILLAN AND BALLY AUGHRIM

DESCENDANTS OF ALEXANDER VI.

LORD HIGH STEWARD OF SCOTLAND, 1273

Died 20 Feb. 1864

Philipp. iv. 8

The second wife's epitaph was in the churchyard:

MARGARET TIGHE-GREGORY
(*née* GARROD)
WIFE OF THE REV. TIGHE-GREGORY
BY BIRTH "LOW" AS THE BLESSED VIRGIN—
BY INTELLIGENCE, EDUCATION, MARRIAGE "RAISED"
IN THE ESTIMATE OF SOCIETY
BY EVERY WOMANLY GRACE AND EVERY CHRISTIAN VIRTUE
"LITTLE LOWER THAN THE ANGELS"—
BY DEATH WITH GOD.

"Is there a tombstone to the third wife?" I asked.

"No, the last wife is living still."

"Is it true that the second was the first wife's servant, and that the second's successor was her own maid?"

"Lies," was the laconic response.

"Is it true," I resumed, "that, during the last hours of his life, he would have his coffin under his bed?"

"No, it is not true, his mind was clear until the end; his spirit lived on when his body was already dead. He died in 1909, and had been taking three services on Sundays up till Easter."

"The first wife," she told me, "was a very nice lady; the second was a village girl, a farmer's daughter."

"And the third?" I asked.

"Not of these parts—American!"

"It is strange that," I remarked, "so vigorous a person has left no children."

"Clergymen must marry," she replied.

"Yes, but you'd have thought he'd have left children—after three marriages."

"Why should he?"

I offer her a gratuity which she refuses. The rector's old collie is worrying my chauffeur, who whispers to me, "Her to whom you are speaking is the third wife, sir—the innkeeper just told me."

I shake hands with the person I had mistaken for some one else, and ask her to accept the donation for the poor-

box. She says she will be delighted, and in spite of my terrible *faux pas* we part quite amicably.

This wonderful old clergyman had begun bicycling when he had already turned eighty. Appointed in 1845, he was sixty-five years in the parish of Bawdsey, and had latterly taken on Ramsholt as well.

I have often noticed that the clergy, when discussing questions which concern the public welfare, display less personal bias, and a greater impartiality, than the average layman, who too often views such matters from the standpoint of how it will affect himself.

In the old days the parson leavened a majority, chiefly composed of farmers, which was naturally inimical to education. Alas! to-day he is not strong enough to leaven a lump composed of the County Council.

I have known and loved many different kinds of clergymen, strong, earnest workers, broad in their judgment of others, if narrow in practice for themeslves, and with this sincere tribute to the faithful though too often unappreciated discharge of duty on their part, this chapter may fittingly end.[1]

[1] Judging by his friars, who so well lived up to their name of "brothers," I claim the support of Shakspeare in this award of praise—though Shakspeare wrote at a time when the calumny which owed its birth to greed, Oh! matre fœdâ, filia fœdior!—had blackened the Church with lies, as it is blackening it again now, in these days of ours, in which even a proof, if it breathes religion, is a drug in the picture market, and in which I have known golf-caddies to receive double pay on Sundays. In Shakespeare's times, Thomas Cromwell, the Monastery Hammer, must have been fresh in men's memories; and Oliver, his kinsman, was very soon to complete the job by diabolical mutilation of the Churches and murder of the King.

CHAPTER VIII

COUNTY COUNCILS

To understand the policy of our fathers, we may compare the influence of the clergy to light—spiritual and intellectual—'varsity light—laid on in every village, as gas and water in towns. How are the sons of the rich educated? Mainly by the clergy. In Italy, by priests. Will not the rich have the best?

It is the anti-clerical Calvinist spirit that robs the poor, who are blind to their own best interests, and it robs the country too. The parson loved his school, kept a healthy check on the expenditure, took no extra pay for it, and in many cases built his own school and almost supported it out of his own pocket. All this is changed. Money is unnecssarily spent in a host of officials. The virtue of Thrift—England's chief need—is discouraged.

It is the same steady anti-clerical, nay anti-Christian, nay even pagan reaction, that is going to do much worse things yet. Luxury and pleasure are rampant; all checks must go, and the village child often turns into a domestic with sweets in one hand and a novelette in the other. "From Housemaid's Cap to Coronet" was the title of the book my son found his cook devouring on the sofa, while the joint that was to play Old Harry with his digestion was wasting its sweetness in the larder air.

In his "History of the French Revolution," Mr J. E. Symes admits that for twelve centuries the Church, which was one of the chief points of attack, "had worked wonders."

When Elizabeth helped to uncork the Republican "Geni" from the Netherland bottle, of which Spain was the rightful owner, the task, though necessary, was most distasteful to her. Did her strong brain foresee the invasion of England by a worse enemy even than Spain? By that very same

evil "Geni" which would thrust the next royal occupant but one from the very throne on which she sat, a headless carcase from a headless kingdom—did she foresee the American Colony torn from its mother? Did she foresee France, headless and bleeding too, and to-day Portugal—soldiers ready—like rat-catchers watching at holes—to shoot down priests and nuns, the unselfish benefactors of the very class to which those soldiers belong? And to-morrow?

It is true England and the Netherlands soon so far recovered their senses as to restore their monarchies; but the poison is still working, and it will, as long as men can force their way up to the ranks of the "*Haves*" by setting the "*Have nots*" at the throats of the "*Haves*."

For thirty-five years, in town and country, I have had close intercourse with both Anglican clergy and Roman Catholic priests, and I solemnly aver that there is no other class to be compared with them in fitness for the post they held as guardians of the education of the poor. Alas! I am but a voice in the wilderness, and there is no one to help them of all the thousands they have so disinterestedly helped.

The small school board—the first result of the exclusion of the clergy in country districts—was admittedly *the* blot on the rural escutcheon.

But the main obstacle popular education had to overcome in Suffolk was a prejudice on the part of well-meaning farmers, and the landed interest generally (equally well meaning) against the diffusion of knowledge. The small board, by ostracising or practically emasculating the only university influence (leisured and resident), intensified this prejudice.

The old system had, so to speak, switched on the universities to the villages, as hospitals in medicine and as county cricket in sport. Nothing could be better; but the small boards were abominations. Larger areas would have met the difficulty. What happened? By a stroke of the pen all the local management (except in name) went by the board, and, to quote a late Suffolk M.P.—

"The Local Education Authorities are far too wide and lead to excessive centralization and to decay of local interests. This should be set right either by a general union of areas, or by an extensive delegation of power to local elected bodies."

Strangely enough, the L.E. Authority as a whole brings

once more triumphantly to the front the old bucolic dread of mental enlightenment, which had been slowly yielding to the united efforts of the Board of Education and clergy. An earl who years ago would have endorsed this agricultural antipathy, now pleads that reading and writing are the beginning and not the end. Gardening, properly treated, forms an admirable accessory, and was, years and years ago, started by the clergy, though abandoned after trial, but its boom with the L.E.A. must be viewed with suspicion.

Mr Pretyman, in defending the Act of 1902, contended that it (the Act) spread a greater interest in education. Nous verrons. It had its good points.

The burden was removed from the shoulders of the few to those of the many. But when will people (especially in Suffolk) realize that they themselves help to pay local rate and imperial grant? Once the weight is hoisted on to the rate, and a deep groan of relief is " put-up " from Suffolk. But the very fact of many shoulders tends to extravagances, and a reaction is bound to follow, wherein popular education becomes unpopular.

His old political rival, Mr Everett, comes nearer to the truth—but how sad is the bitterness manifested by both these able men—Conservative and Radical—against sectarianism, when we know what priceless service has been rendered to education (as well as to English liberty and all our greatest national blessings) by the priests, clergy, and ministers whom they now as sectarian lumber thrust aside, chiefly, I fear, at least in some cases, in order that they may step into their shoes. He says :—

" The Act passed in the autumn reforms (?) out of existence the most effective machinery for advancing national education that the country has hitherto possessed *No popularly elected bodies called into existence in this land of ours during the last century have a more splendid record to show of efficient of self-denying, of advantageous service rendered to the people than our School Boards.*[1] The Tory Government, having first impeded the work of these honourable institutions by Cockerton judgments, etc., now crowns its retrogressive policy by destroying them altogether. This session His

[1] The italic is mine.—A. J. S.

Majesty is made to tell us the evil work is to be completed by the destruction of the London School Board, which has been the pioneer in our national educational progress for the last thirty years, and our poor king is actually made to call this shameful work of destruction Educational 'Reform.' Is it consistent with loyalty to the sovereign to put such false words into his mouth?

"Our best educational machinery is being destroyed; *our whole educational system is being thrown into confusion.*[1]

"There is but too much reason to fear that the revolutionary changes being introduced *will be costly to the ratepayer*, will introduce strife and confusion where there was peace, and will hinder rather than promote educational progress."

It amounts to this:—

Because the small rural boards have sinned, wipe all the boards out, and brand any attempt to conserve existing machinery (voluntary and board) as "*revolutionary*"!

But did not the change, at least in rural districts, tend rather to spread over all the wheels the obstructions which hitherto clogged only one small wheel of the huge educational machine?

Picture a village cricket meeting. "Gentlemen, I propose Mr So and So of the Zingari Club for the Committee."

"Well, yer see—it's like this—if he come here he'll quickly see we don't quite know how to hold a bat—much less 'boulls'—I say keep him out." Carried with enthusiasm.

It is not only for those faithful pioneers the clergy I hold this brief. I happen to know that at a L.E.A. meeting, when it was proposed to co-opt two retired H.M.I.'s resident in the neighbourhood, the motion was rejected—on the ground "it would never do—it would make things hum."

Do not let me be misunderstood. The L.E.A. are bodies of conscientious, kind, and capable men—the best that can be got for the price—for they must have leisure and money; but they are human, and, being human they are influenced by their local surroundings, and, what is far worse, by their subordinates. Nor is it ever likely that their subordinates will encourage the enrolment of individuals whose experience and expert knowledge render them independent of such assistance as subordinates can furnish. Furthermore, I

[1] The italic is mine.—A. J. S.

doubt whether in the country or in Parliament education is popular enough to draw the best men. Horse-shows, or Territorials, or politics are quite another pair of shoes.

Years ago an H.M.I. recommended tortoise-stoves—country schools with outside walls and nothing between them and the North Pole, schools in which neither hot water nor hot air are practicable, can never be properly heated (except at unreasonable cost) by open grates, roaring bank notes up the chimney while they pump in draughts on remote children.

A sweeping substitution of open grates was one of the first moves of an L.E.A. I know. Assistant-teachers used naturally to take less money when near home. This wise provision was swept aside by a cast-iron rule. I mention these two examples—space permitting no more. *Verbum sap.*

Advance we must; but the golden rule is, let the old thing once recommended wear out, before the newly recommended thing comes in!

To pronounce on the new system as whole, it is early days yet. But one thing is certain—it has cast a gloom over the rural schools, tending to sever them from their best friends, the clergy and the leisured classes.

In towns where masses can dispense with what they so ungratefully stigmatize as patronage—though all the while their bread-and-butter comes from capital; and that bread-and-butter has been in recent times far more plentiful than it ever was before—but in the country the cleavage is fatal. The towns may pour forth their emissaries, blatant ever (except when face to face with those they malignantly attack), whose course from chapel to chapel throughout the country may be traced by diminutive posters—as snails by their slime—and gradually the rural labourer may assimilate the delightfully one-sided doctrines of the artisan without even HIS intelligence, sense of proportion, reasoning power, and self-control—all four far too limited. But it will mean a day of reckoning.

When Mr Chamberlain, to save the independence of the few, whose school fees were paid for them, sacrificed the independence of all, by making education free, another step was gained by the party who have since extorted pensions and school dinners.

Dress is compulsory for the labouring classes, but the State does not pay for their clothes. Drink alone (besides fifty other causes) would to-morrow refill the vessel of poverty, even if we could to-day empty it. "The poor ye will always have with you." "Panem et circenses" was among the swan-songs of sinking Rome; and, strangely enough, "Luck" was the last abstract idea deified there—mascots are everywhere here to-day. Where will it end?

In the recent railway strike in France, Providence seems to have sent them a Republican President far more tyrannical than any king, and he saved France. Either the tyranny of labour will end in worse tyranny of the old-fashioned sort, or else Labour will kill its own golden goose.

"An Englishman" (*Daily Mail*, Nov. 16, 1910) most cleverly compares the "Anarchy of Politics" with the "Anarchy of Brush and Literature," citing "that insensate orgy of blood and madness" (the French Revolution) to prove that once we have travelled "on the road of theft" the only "path of safety is the path of retreat"—one more added to the many proofs that Revolution is but Retrogression in disguise.

On a smaller scale the same truth applies to Elementary Education. When enthusiasts had disposed of the argument, "The children have ignorant homes, therefore they should be ignorant too," they advanced to the next point of attack, "The children have squalid homes, therefore their schools should be squalid too," and this they carried also, but with the usual tendency to extremes. King Mob must have royal palaces, and Art must produce her best to decorate the walls, and displace wholesale and helter-skelter, instead of gradually, the dear old company—who had done good and faithful service so long—countless elephants, camels, Kings of Israel, and others jumbled together—and tumbling down the stairs in a sort of reverse process to the animals going into the ark.

Mr Acland's circular (321) worked wonders after 1892, and nothing has been more encouraging in my experience than the hearty response of clergy and others to that appeal. In almost every case material additions were made to the health and comfort of the children, and Lo! by the earth system's magic touch, fever converted into fruit and flowers.

If it had stopped there, all would have been well. But no. The L.E.A. were let loose, keen as hounds in the early morning, and the patching and tinkering that best represented rural finance, and best, by the hardening process, prepared poverty for the struggle of competition, were harshly mocked and ruthlessly condemned by experts who came with, so to speak, townified eyes and townified ignorance of what those schools had been, and the loving sacrifices made to keep them as they were. Once more Revolution will spell Reaction! The late Sir Hugh Adair once laughingly told me that he now never experienced one of the difficulties sometimes incident to country life. Whenever he wished to entertain his friends, he took them down to see the village sight—the new palatial external premises of his tiny school.

At a meeting of the Beckingham (Notts) Council school managers, the head teacher was instructed to discontinue the use of the hymn, "All things bright and beautiful," in "Hymns Ancient and Modern," objection having been taken to the third verse :—

> "The rich man in his castle,
> The poor man at his gate,
> God made them high or lowly,
> And ordered their estate."

But to return to the political point of view. It will be a bad day for England when the cleavage of the classes extends to rural districts. My driver recently showed a printed poem furtively circulated in a village alehouse, wittily charging parsons with theft of every offertory! He firmly believed its diabolical lies.

Already the big houses have shown a tendency to neglect their duties to the class immediately below them, by flocking together with their motor wings, like rooks, and leaving the smaller birds to themselves—though who can deny big-house generosity and kindness in all good schemes?

Feudalism and war have their strong points, and peace, and democracy must find substitutes, or the good old fable of the body and its members will have to be studied again. In democracy as in everything else, one-sided loyalty will never last, though platforms shriek themselves hoarse.

I have heard more than one instance of a cultured lady of the highest connections complain of her squire's wife, "Had I been a cottager she would often have called when I was ill." That her husband had not a "big shoot" was all they had against her, and this in a Christian country. No one expects—least of all such as she—familiarity; but the decent amenities must be attended to if the social fabric is to last. Anything to do with *Dreadnoughts* or army or navy sets all the squires afire with energy. But do they realize that there is something in a household more important than the watch dog? And nations are but conglomerate households.

Clerical catechizing, no doubt, had fallen into disrepute, but weak as it was, it brought the clergyman into the school, and that breath of university culture created an atmosphere that cannot be replaced, unless we are to admit that those hollow, windy substitutes for a 'varsity training—the examination-won B.A., etc., can be regarded as anything like an equivalent.

Why is it that the industrial classes, who love to imitate the manners, dress, character of their (of course not) "betters," deliberately exclude from contact with their children persons who may be described as "grafts from the public schools"? Why! What are their boys devouring day by day but accounts in their school-books of such men as—Clive—Nelson—Goldsmith—Cowper—Gordon—many of them sons of clergy? Why bar the real thing? Not that I am not so fatuous as to deny that the old system had serious blemishes.

I remember a deformed dwarf for a school-mistress, in a dwarfed room, with dwarfed premises outside—who, trembling all over—like the people possessed of bad spirits when an apostle appeared, besought me to overlook her helpless collapse, on the ground that she had never before encountered anything worse than a DIOSHEAN (Diocesan) inspector. Another was in receipt of £27 a year, and her inefficiency so fenced in by firm belief on the part of squire and parents in her piety, that all I dared do in my earliest reports was to draw attention to the marvellous modern advance in the cheapness of soap. A similar case (the titled manager being a personal friend of the head of my department) I only overthrew after a long struggle, and I could not have done it then, had she not obstinately persisted in setting down

her subtraction sums on the black board with the smaller amount on the top

But let a village parent speak for herself :—

"*March* 9, 1885.

"Sir,—Please excuse the liberty I have taken in ritin to you but if you dont no what is goin on at this hear school you ought bein as you are inspectator my childen dont lern nothin nor other peples nither, their is over 80 goes to school and only one man to tech them and he gets childen out of the first class to tech mine as noes as much as they do, but not anough the masters wife have been confined and have not bin to school for three weeks and when shes well she only goes for a few ours at a time and what do she no who have never bin teched much herself and never did teach befor she come hear so she say herself she get paid as much as them as them as went before her and did the same work only better so I want to know how childen is to get on at all with such teechin as that and the master say there is to be no halftimers now how is poor fokes to live, there is alas such a nise in the school when any boddy go by they carnt lern like that, I havnt got a deal of lernin myself but I wants my childen to no somethin ; so please excuse the ritin sir and be good anough to see into things.—I remain Sir, Yours respeckfully A Anxhious Mother.

"*P.S.*—I beg pardon sir for not puttin my name as the master will be down on my childen and be a threshin of them if you speak about it and he do anough of that."

Technically, of course, such catechizing as the following would provoke a smile even in the wooden stolidity and gloom which too often and unnecessarily darken and sadden our national school teaching.

"Now, my dear children" (in loving tone), "answer all together" (Oh ! sweet command to the nine-tenths of them, whose minds curl up like sleeping ferrets down an inaccessible rabbit burrow—and will *not* come out)—

"The things that are unseen are—"

"Seeeeen"—in a melancholy wail.

"No, no" (irritably), "my dear children—the things that are seen are——"

"Unnnseeeeen."

"No, no, my dear children—you're not attending," etc., etc.

But they were attending and enjoying the capping process so dear to the child mind (and even to some impatient adults), but they were much too clever to think the Canon was so weak as to expect merely a repetition of his own word. They thought they must at least vary the answer a little.

And of course there were weak spots in the old system of management.

"Our mistress is rather afraid of 'English,' as she does not understand how to 'analyse sentences,' or anything of the 'Latin prefixes.' Pardon my troubling you."

And Major-General ——, J.P., writes furiously on blue foolscap to the Board of Education because his wife came to the inspection expecting that "her opinions might be sought" on the needlework (largely consisting of useful and cheap work for her household)—and it was not.

And the Rev. the Rector endorses—and Whitehall "thinks no answer necessary"—but Whitehall was not always so strong—especially when back-staired.

And examinations were abused, but examinations, though harrowing (which is good for soil and soul) have not been wasted. They have taught the teachers to be their own examiners.

And of course the answering that answered to a question, as to a spring, was not education—*e.g.* Spring *Dundee*—Answer: "Hemp-jute-and-marmalade"—followed by "And what is jute?"

"Please, sir, what silk pocket hans are made of."

A candidate in her examination paper unwittingly spoke truth when she wrote in reply to the question—"What is the educational value of writing and arithmetic?"

"The educational value of writing is 1s. per head. Arithmetic cultivates attention and reflection—value, 1s."

And there were masters who would not hesitate to flog boys for furtively handing to one another answers in examinations, and yet would themselves, under the rose, hand from school to school HIS questions. And there were

others whose descriptions of their treatment by love so delighted me as I strode along the front rows that I raised my hand in wonder—only to find a dozen boys or girls (alas, it was more than once) cower as expectant of a blow! A lady once told me they find out, in America, good keepers of horses, cows, or chickens in this way.

And there were married mistresses at work when they should not be, and there were managers, even in boroughs, whom the clergyman was forced to call "a motley crew"—and when there was a pestilential stench they would bottle it, and let the neck of the bottle open on the school window, and managers who, when I found sixty scholars in a room built for thirty, replied: "It's only for Scripture." And worst of all—managers did not manage—unmindful of Mr Pretyman's admirable saying, "The best manure is the landlord's footprint."

And a head-mistress with an annual salary of £46, 14s. 2d. might make strange entries in her logbook in that golden age.

"I also beg to say that the children have never been hurt by my slight boxing, and I entered it each time in the log, simply to punish myself, because I have such an aversion to the least. It pains me, I believe, considerably more than the punished, the thought that I should have to hurt any member of The One United Body of our Lord, I shrink from it; but some are so wilful, corporal punishment is seldom resorted to till obliged.—I am, Sir, Yours respectfully."

One would have liked to hear the children's side.

And there was the small rural board which said, "We all know the school is unsatisfactory in every possible way, but you see this is the difficulty, she is related to four out of the seven of the Committee."

A member of a similar board, after six bad reports, said to the teacher, "Now that so much has been done by managers you too must make an effort."

"Yes, sir—but—I want, more encouragement," was the master's reply.

And there used to be naughty boys, who (1) had the audacity to fall over the spiked railings, and spike themselves at the top of the stairs—entirely their own fault—of course, (2) or who, on the master's correcting them with the cane, had the insolence to make a shrieking noise as a display of temper.

Though I fear spiked railings, even under the County Council, will continue to receive their dole of human sacrifice, I ineffectually reported three bad cases—in the last of which (a lonely village school), when the mistress and her assistant ran shrieking away, I had the good fortune to be able to stop the bleeding, and, by sending the boy to the nearest town in my motor—save the boy's life—and ("freeze, freeze, thou bitter sky!") receive no thanks from manager, parent, or child. On the other hand, under the L.E.A..'s régime, the following catastrophe would most probably never have occurred.

Many years ago I drove up to another remote rural school just as the schoolmistress was being pumped on at the village pump. Interested in her lesson, and backing with her "dress improver" towards a fenderless fire, her first intimation was a flame over her shoulder. The assistant rushed shrieking out of the school, the mistress followed all ablaze, fanning the flames by her flight. After knocking and being refused at six cottage doors, she sank down under the pump, and one by one the cottage women stole out to pump on her!

We carried her home on a sofa, covered in a blanket, but though her face, which had not been touched, filled us with hope, she died after six weeks of suffering.

But the L.E.A.s have among other good points one splendid characteristic—they can hit out straight and hard, to the unutterable relief of all well-disposed members of society. Before their time, when a master was known to "yield to folly," and yet there was no local person bold enough to stand forth and prove it, the benevolent longsuffering of a distant Department, in spite of the inspector's wrath, was even more loath to accuse, and it is a sad fact that men of intemperate habits often exercise a stronger influence than the well conducted and sober over their neighbours, in spite of the strenuous efforts of clergy and others. In some cases such a master's boon companions at the village alehouse were the lay managers.

One December night, when passing on my way home from a distant evening school through a village, just after the congregation at the alehouse had been by law dispersed, we collided with a group in which I recognized the well-known figure of the village schoolmaster. In the usual Norfolk suit under a Tyrolese hat, heavily ringed, he moved,

as did the rest, with difficulty. Ulstered as I was, and with a long white woollen neckscarf flying behind—for it was an awful night—I did not expect him to recognize me, when, in spite of my Sam Weller's advice, given under his breath—"I shouldn't say nothin' at all to none of 'em." I alighted to remonstrate in a whisper. "Go home—and I will not have seen you—go home."

Even when sober the man was a past master of the art of "swagger." To inspect his school was to be taken, so to speak, like an infant into his arms, with nurse-like prattle—about the twenty H.M.I.s he'd known, and all their different little ways, differing in everything but one point, viz., warm admiration of his (the schoolmaster's) magnificent qualifications, and how, in effect, if I were only a good little boy, he was quite sure he would never quarrel with me, though his quarrels had proved fatal to at least three other H.M.I.s and their subs, etc., etc. But it was nothing to his performance in his present condition. Even the huge constable (all the rest had forsaken him) who tipped just a little (but quite enough) backwards over the perpendicular, and the other comrade, who now availed himself of the support of the railing, over which he hung with the abandon, but not the grace, of a gigantic vine tendril, laughed immoderately at the way in which the schoolmaster mincingly, with a desperate effort, walked repeatedly along the road 100 yards, out and back, muttering—"Shan't go home—shan't go home, H.M.I. very powerful till 4 P.M.—obey him then—vanishes after 4 P.M. like Hamlet's ghost—nowhere till 9 A.M. next morning—shan't obey—shan't go home—shan't go home." Nevertheless I clung to him, whispering in his ear the best advice I could think of—in vain; and as I returned to the cart, a faint and half-encouraging, half-taunting murmur towards the earth from the railing reached my ears—"Keep yer flag flying, governor" (it was the time of the Boer War), which convulsed the other two with laughter, and this time even my Sam Weller could not help joining. It was a neat hit at that abomination to a Suffolk male mind—a long neck-scarf.

As I lifted my foot to the high step, my somewhat crestfallen feelings (including wounded *amour propre*) were further ruffled by the parting remark of the slightly top-heavy P. C. in the most patronizing of tones :—

" I-wish-you'd-been-my-father,-governor," as he feebly tried to help me to mount the step.

I thought at least *he* would have backed me up !

The rest of the drive was passed in the silence that generally succeeds a Sam Weller " score "—nevertheless I afterwards learned from the grateful lips of a distracted wife and daughter that he did return home, and that gratitude came with repentance and headache in the morning, and shortly after the P. C. was transferred to a distant town, though I never reported on either, as it was a first offence, as far as I knew.

After all, my experience has been less painful than that of my father-in-law, Canon Blomfield, once was. When he heard on a Saturday night shouts proceeding from the footpath from Bicester to Launton, which skirts the rectory, he resolved to watch one night. The first man he met was one of the regular attendants at church, who accosted him with, " Oh lorks, Mr Blomfield, what are you doin' out this time o' night, you ought to be at home, reading your Bible."

The saddest part of this story, from the temperance point of view, is the naïve admission of the Canon, that it was only in the energy of his young days he did it.

The shouting was supposed to be to scare the ghosts in the churchyard—which was not lessened by a former rector's wife, who used to wrap herself up in a white sheet and wander among the tombstones at night. An enormous elm with a hollow trunk was supposed to turn round at midnight. In justice to the Canon it must be added that he explained that he found that the method did not answer. He was not, anyhow, like the parson I recently heard preaching on the Licensing Bill, with a brewer for his squire and churchwarden.

My brethren, he said, " Let no intemperance ever rob you of your beer ; beware of milk-sops," etc.

The *sang-froid* of that parishioner reminds one of the failure of an attempt to shock a similar offender out of his folly, by impersonating a ghost in the churchyard. The only effect of the surprise was a perfectly calm question from the tipsy man—" Who are you ? "

The man in the sheet was so taken aback that he replied

on the spur of the moment—being unable to think of anything more suitable—" St Paul."

With the deepest interest the culprit responded, " Shnt Paul!—the very pershon I wanted to see—Now-did-yer-ever get any answer to that excheedingly long letter you wrote to the Theshlonlyuns?"

After thirty-five years in towns and counties I am compelled to lend the support of my experience in civilian circles to Lord Wolseley's startling statement on military circles. " The curse of our army and our race is drinking."

Sooner will oil and water mix than Scotch and Suffolk school-mistresses work under one another.

At a village, whose abbey ruins are among the most remarkable as they are among the most unappreciated monuments in England, a Scotch head-mistress of lengthened London School Board experience and remarkable energy and capacity was put over a Suffolk subordinate. Both meant well, but the head must needs try two impossibilities: (1) to do all the talking for her scholars; (2) to be in two places at once (her assistant's and her own). The assistant may have gone too far in the opposite direction under both heads.

When the scholastic kettle, so to speak, boiled over, and the vicar called me in as a friendly arbitrator, I privately suggested a master, if the mistress would go. I was indeed mindful of " incorrigibles," who are apt to appear in village schools when mistresses are not sufficiently masculine; and I remembered the school where, when there were two mistresses, one in each room, a padlock was indignantly demanded of the managers. In course of time, when the head-mistress had been replaced by a master, first the key of the padlock was lost, and after a time the padlock itself could not be found.

The vicar most loyally, then as afterwards, stood by and championed his schoolmistress, in spite of her want of politeness (to say the least of it) to him.

Then at a meeting of managers—after which I was generally embraced for acting unofficially as peacemaker—the belligerent amazons shook hands, and the assistant agreed to leave in a month. What more could " stern Caledonia " expect? But it all broke out again in a week, and one day,

meeting by chance the Secretary of the County Council accompanied by a constable, I was persuaded to accompany them for scene last, act last, of the tragedy—unofficially of course. But no one answered the loudest knocks at the locked door of the schoolhouse To save breakage I asked to be allowed to ascertain by inquiries whether the mistress was in the house or not, for a temporary head was conducting the school. Hearing she was there, and fearing she was in a fit, I consented, if the vicar and the police officer (representing Church and State) held the ladder for me, to enter by an upper window too small for either of them. I found the house empty, and I then started off to a distant cottage, the police officer offering to accompany me, merely " to see his aunt " who happened to live next door to the said cottage.

I found the mistress and her daughter, but I did not " find peace " by any means ! As they obstinately misunderstood the pure kindness of the vicar, in spite of my proof positive to the contrary, so they obstinately misunderstood what was meant for pure kindness on the part of H.M.I., in spite of the vicar's proof positive to the contrary. There are many people who cannot understand real kindness. They do not think men can be such fools as not to taste the delights of spite and vindictiveness when they have a chance.

Of course mother and daughter were convinced that I brought the policeman for a scene, and the two hours spent in that awful interview, undergone by me simply and solely as a devotee endures some cruel ordeal that good may come, for it was no part of my duties whatever, (teeming as those hours were with diabolical misrepresentation), were the best practice I ever had at bearing calmly injustice and insult. I select a mild sample. I laughed at the very absurdity of charges I knew to be false. " Mephistopheles ! " hissed the daughter—and the mother, pointing up—" There is One up there at whom even H.M.I. must tremble : and your time's coming " (smacking her lips)—" your time's coming."

Wondering, to the police officer, on our return, how I managed not to lose my temper , when I knew the absolutely friendly motives that dictated my attempts to make peace, I was surprised at his reply—" You did well, sir : the hotter you give it such as them the better."

I afterwards discovered that he thought I meant " lose

my *bad* temper," for he understood me to boast of having kept my rage boiling all those two hours—a third example of the impossibility of "seeing eye to eye" with those who have "no eyes to see."

But why this length? To sing the praises of the L.E.A.'s treatment of such cases. Honour, everlasting honour! Had she climbed that, alas! too accessible "back stair" at Whitehall, every official from the President down to the minutest office-boy messenger would have stampeded, taken to the river, done anything rather than face that tongue.

There was another blessing conferred by the L.E.A. Form IX. used to be an annual pest. The Rector of Stradbroke well named it the Boomerang. It always came back. It had two especially awkward questions—the date of birth of the teacher, and the "style" of the managers who signed. In the case of the former I have known the whole phalanx of "their Lordships" reduced to submission by one wiry village spinster schoolmistress, who stoutly refused to disclose her age, and called them "no gentlemen" for asking it. In the case of the latter, such expressions as "independent gentlemen" were not uncommon, the Radicals generally being the most tender on the point, and when THEY posted the form, crests abounded on the seals.

To protest against the testimonials there given would be to whip a dead horse. My father-in-law, when expostulating with the principal of a training college for recommending an indifferent schoolmaster, received the reply—"Yes, wasn't he a fool?" And in a similar case the manager of a school replied, "Call that a good testimonial? You'll have to give him a great deal better one before you get rid of him."

Yes, and twenty years ago, when the L.E.A. were not—"Gentlemen," said the chairman of a village school board, alluding to a mistress who, to save her fuel, took a bath and performed her toilet in the class room—while she kept the children waiting outside—"as she must go, let us give her a very good testimonial."

However anti-educational the L.E.A. seem to be, they compare favourably enough with the average farmer, pure and simple. One once, clinging to the back of my dog-cart as I drove through the market, shouted that he would turn me

out of Suffolk, because I protested against bricking up south windows to save blinds in buildings built for children. "I now, I now—there ain't nawthing yeu can't tell me, I down now," another used to shout at meetings, or, after a clear exposition of the school needs by a business-like parson—"I should like to ask one question—Is there anythin' to PYE—Cos if there's anything to PYE that 'ont deww."

At a meeting of Suffolk farmers years ago, at Framlingham, when the third standard had been fixed for total exemption, the question arose—"What is the third standard?" It produced quite a panic, for no one knew!

At a meeting attended by Lady Bateman I dispelled a scare about a shilling rate, proving it would be at the outside—4d.

They would have clasped me in their arms before the meeting, but as soon as they had (so to speak) got used to it, they demurred at even any rate at all!

I asked them whether within a stone's-throw of the cross, where an East Anglian king was pierced to death with arrows for his faith, they could begrudge the pinprick of a 4d. rate for theirs?

"None of yer rude screens here—however polite you may be in recommending them," said another farmer to an energetic rector. But even Lancashire suffered from uneducated education managers. The Lancashire magnate, whose remark *Punch* honoured me by inserting, in answer to my comment on his school mistress, "Not hold enough, not hold enough, you know, Mr Cotton," replied, "I'll eat my 'at if she ever sees 40 again."

A member of a small Lancashire rural board said, "The testimonial is certainly poor, but so are we; will she not be better than none?"

"Failed, has she?" asked a Congregationalist minister, who had written a glowing testimonial on the moral character of his pupil-teacher in Form IX. "Well, I'm not sorry—she *was* a bit short of principle."

"Dear Mr Swinburne, can you recommend us a good school for a pupil teacher, who is just coming out of prison?" is another.

Yes, the old system had its weak points.

The racy schoolmaster who said: "Pass—oh! they'll

pass, all of them—certain—why (proudly), any one of them can copy three desks off." Or for schedule purposes—" Joe Smith—'sithee, thy name is Tom Robinson, Joe Smith." " Humbug I may be, but not a cur—Oh NO ! " said another; and when a collier calls about the ill-treatment of his son, he lightly strips off his coat and gives mister Coal a downright drubbing—to the delight of his boys.

Or another—when it was our hateful duty to endorse parchments of teachers with annual entries :—

After a long homily on the folly of debt, and how he was above all that, " I must be frank with you—I've got a sovereign on my parchment—you shall have it next week —without fail."

The days when children were practised to read, as if their books had not almost every other page torn out, or thumbed half away! It was indeed a sight worth seeing to watch the cleverness with which the little reader jerked now this side, now that, forward and back, knowing what child has it in, and once more one wondered whether profusion of apparatus and appointments might not do sometimes more harm than good to the nation.

Another small rural board complained to its newly elected member, the vicar : " Since you've been appointed we can't get the stones gathered."

And there were in those days tolerated schoolmasters of whom it might fairly be said that the only thing they did not know was the depth of their own ignorance, which was, after all, certainly pardonable, for it was unfathomable.

On the other hand the change was harshly introduced. What wonder if, when the parsons heard the new officials blowing their own trumpets over Sunday night schools, etc., they fell off one by one from the educational tree, like smoked flies from a rose-bush ? We, H.M.I.s, were never allowed to write and recommend books on teaching, gardening, etc., when recommendation meant a command; nor to draw up lists of weeds for the use of children, with barbarous Latin enough to puzzle a first-class classical scholar.

If ever a weed poisoned good soil, that mental weed poisoned a vast amount of wholesome interest in horticulture.

When carpenters' benches and tools flooded the land,

while hoes and spades came in at the door, school libraries fled out at the window. Gardening as an accessory is splendid, but when it comes to netting for fruit—the rabbits—the rats —the pheasants—the manure—I bow my head, though experience has taught me something of rural matters on my own land, where I have learned not to grow fruits and flowers costing double the ordinary price. I retire—leaving the settlement to others.

Have the people whose hands draw on other people's pockets, in tolerated robbery, remembered Mr Punch's story of the Suffolk farmer who, on seeing in the Academy the swine violently rushing down a steep place, asked his vicar if he could answer him a question.

"Certainly," replied the vicar, delighted to find one he had almost despaired of suddenly interested in spiritual matters.

"Ehw pyed for them pigs?"

Would there had been more clergymen like the Rev. Roland Upcher and Rev. Claude Sutton and many others, who by their bold defiance checked unnecessary outlay, and yet preserved an enthusiasm of efficiency no Code or Council will ever rival.

"You of course know, the question of purchasing property for public purposes requires a deal of discretion and has to be done quickly and quietly. If you could come down on the morning of the 13th inst., it would greatly oblige," writes a powerful town education official. In 1903 I besought the L.E.A.s of Norfolk and Suffolk to move cautiously over ground strewn with the corpses of the slaughtered boards, especially on the down hill road of bricks and mortar.

It is still my opinion that before the extreme step of erecting pupil teachers' buildings for centres, the experiments of a double set, and a fee to the head teacher should have been tried. Time will prove.

The Red Tape of Whitehall was enough—we now have a double set—from the County as well.

The Lieutenant retiring on half-pay to live in America was followed by a Minute from the War Office demanding 9½d. surcharged, before he retired. The demand, though ignored, continued to cross the ocean until, when he fell ill, a friend replied "Lieutenant ill." It continued to come until they

wrote "Lieut. dead." Even then it came till "Lieut. —— still dead," at last stopped it.

A lady in Devonshire, whose aunt died in Paris, after much correspondence with the French Government, received an express promise that the body should be duly transmitted to her. The coffin duly arrived, but not her aunt; for, on opening it for a last look, to her horror, she found a general in full uniform. In reply to an indignant wire the answer was telegraphed—"Your aunt was buried to-day with full military honours, pray keep the General."

A little knowledge is proverbial. A new concoction was ordered by the L.E.A. to prevent epidemics. It made the floors look damp, and on the principle of the Faith cure, I suffered from Rheumatism. Another drawback far more fatal was:—it spoiled the ladies' dresses. I am not sure whether the written testimony of an experienced educationist finally killed this fad. "We have not had an epidemic for years; the first outbreak was after the application of your germ-killer."

I do not suppose any one suffered from Red Tape more than H.M.I. himself.

If anyone saw our weekly diaries he would never abuse an H.M.I. again, for very pity.

So numerous and galling—as well as senseless—(for to a man mean enough to neglect his duty, petty falsification would be a trifle) were the columns to be filled, that I once officially asked for yet one more column in which to record time spent in filling diaries.

In 1903 a teacher wrote to me a letter from which the following is an extract:—

"I am afraid they will say I am not up to date, as I have no certificates for sciences, chemistry, etc. I feel very depressed over this Bill, but I am sure I shall not have appealed to you in vain, for something tells me you will not let me be asked to resign, simply because I am a middle-aged woman.—Believe me, Sir,—Yours most gratefully."

I was present at an inquiry by a Committee of the L.E.A. and I may here take exception to the painful change in the deference shown to me as representative of the Board of Education in Council days compared with the rosy period

before. I might have ascribed it to personal defects of my own, had it not been clearly evinced when my chief and several colleagues attended Council Meetings officially.

I hope I do not misjudge anyone, but I feel convinced that the ready accessibility to Whitehall enjoyed by members and officials of the L.E.A. had something to do with it—a short-sighted policy—for "a house divided, etc." I often found the County Council officials were more *au fait* with the policy and views at headquarters than I myself was.

These remarks are dictated by no animus. The man who can harbour animus after thirty-five years of the kindness and courtesy from Whitehall I have met with, as well as from managers, teachers, and children, must be a monster. But my period of inspection after the appointment of L.E.A.s was anything but the bed of roses it previously was, and I am satisfied that education was to that extent a loser by a general collapse of interest largely due to the same cause. Moreover, the letters addressed by the L.E.A. to Whitehall, often breathed a spirit of bluff and bluster, compared with which the letters addressed to me by the said L.E.A. were mild. The fact is the Board of Education had to resemble the mother one meets with in a train. The L.E.A.s were the spoiled offspring of the Board, and when the elder brothers (H.M. Inspectors) and others complained of their behaviour, they were told to remember the tender years of the new-born infant.

A Scotch schoolmaster, intelligent, athletic, canny, and one whose appointment was a godsend to an important though remote school, came to me in despair with a harrowing communication from the L.E.A. in his pocket.

This head teacher was convicted sometime ago of assaulting a scholar, aged 13, and fined £5 and costs or a month's imprisonment in the second division.

The Bench deemed it desirable that the attention of the Committee should be drawn to the case and so the finding of the Magistrates was forwarded to the L.E.A.

The Magistrates stated that it was clearly proved that the boy was treated with undue and unnecessary violence. For an offence connected with dictation he was first of all caned upon his buttocks very severely; he was then caned apparently on both his hands; his head was then struck very

badly, and then his ear was twisted, with the result that it was apparently totally blackened and so swollen that the orifice became invisible, and the lad had to be taken to a doctor to be examined.

The Sub-Committee of the L.E.A. took a serious view of this cruel treatment inflicted on a young lad, and recommended that Mr —— be dismissed, summarily, from his position as Head Teacher of the Council School, and that the Managers be notified accordingly.

(*Mr —— was informed of this recommendation and of the date and time when it would be considered, and was told that he was at liberty to appeal.*)

I advised him to appeal, and promised to be present in person if possible.

The inquiry, after appeal, was conducted with the utmost kindness, consideration and justice, and indeed in the case of the L.E.A.s, as I suppose in most corporations, if you can only obtain access to the members themselves, nothing could be more reasonable, just and gentle than their treatment of your case. The danger is, when they meet at a distance from the scene of action, and consequently lacking that familiarity with the true nature of affairs, characters, etc. in the locality, and—worst of all—with an allowance of time wholly inadequate for the purpose, etc.

How often have I been told it is not the Council themselves we fear, they are kindness itself, etc., etc. If they would only captain their own ship !

Here are my notes :—

The Assistant teacher (the only adult witness) had not been heard by the Magistrates. The father appeared and admitted he had had no complaint before. He also admitted that his son was quite fond of the Master. Then appeared a youthful Sam Weller (considerably smaller than the victim of the assault who was a strong, sturdy boy). The master alleged that if any damage had been done, it had been done in a squabble with this boy in the play hour. A member of the L.E.A., sharply, with a leading question not admissible in law courts—

" Who sent for you to-day " (Saturday) ?

No reply.

" Did the Schoolmaster ? "

"No-o-o."
"What did you come here for to-day?"
No reply.
"To play?"
"No-o-o."
"Did you play with this boy?"
"Ye-e-s."
"Did you smack his head?"
"No."
"Did he yours?"
"No."
"Which would if either did?"
(His only full, clear and ready answer) "*I* should have smacked *his* head.")

The general Suffolk shrewdness with which this youthful Weller evaded every awkward question, and the final evidence of his pluck put every one into a very good temper, and his evidence ended in a general roar of laughter.

I then informed the Committee that it so happened that I called at the school on the afternoon of the very day in question to measure the school, and being keen on self-help, practically had the school measured by four boys—one of whom was the victim of the assault, A. M.

The smartness of these four boys was so exceptional as to call for especial praise at the time; and I saw no sign of any damage done to any of their heads.

This—with the extraordinary behaviour of the father, who evinced no interest in anything except the question whether the Council was going to pay his day's wages, as well as the obvious air of smartness about the master and school, and a total absence of public interest in the case, produced the natural verdict—

"We find no signs of excessive punishment—the case of the ear and head 'not proven.'"

So the master was saved: but think of the suspense. He might have been ruined for life.

At a large meeting of representatives of several counties to discuss the question of increased accommodation in training colleges. I advocated, as reasonable in more than one sense, the enlargement of the existing denominational establishments. But in stemming the anti-sectarian wave

I stood alone, though I attempted to prove that Education devoid of Christianity was as certainly doomed to failure as Christianity devoid of dogma.

"To exclude dogma from schools in order to suit the various religious views of the various scholars seems to me" I said, "as unreasonable as it would be if, in reply to a wire from Ipswich to Liverpool Street, inquiring how to provide sitting railway accommodation for several passengers suffering from different spinal complaints, and so unable to travel together in one car, the authorities at head quarters wired back 'Take out their back-bones.'"

And flat though this illustration fell on that prejudiced assemblage, I had the pleasure shortly after to read Mr Balfour's remarks to the effect that doctrineless Christianity was an impossibility, and that unchristianized England was a doomed country. And no one can call Mr Balfour a fanatic. I question whether he is even a Churchman. Despised on the day, my advice ultimately prevailed; so for once I was able to dispel the charm of that word "undenominational," dear to modern ears as the "blessed word" Mesopotamia was to the old lady in church.

CHAPTER IX

MOTORS

During the last thirty-five years, I have practically lived in the open, for I am proud to say that, with the few exceptions which are needed to prove a rule, I have always driven in an open conveyance of one sort or another.

To traverse Suffolk, where lines are not laid close to your door as in towns, the thriftier method of travelling is to drive, for to arrive at some given point one has frequently to use two stations, and time-tables often refuse to dovetail.

Memories of hired vehicles and hired horses fill my mind as I review the past, and I have again in imagination one of my numerous drivers, attempting to inspire his steed with the magical words " Trot ole man, Trot ole man."

Had a four-post bed begun to trot, my astonishment would hardly have been greater than had " ole man " evinced any signs of obeying my Jehu's behest.

This and many other trivial memories return to my mind as I glance backwards. Memories of cold days, which were so cold that one envied the fishermen, who, it is said, dip their hands into the sea to warm them; days that made one wish the waves alongside of the cart, that one might do likewise.

One drive from Hoxne to Snape Priory in March, when a blizzard from the east was blowing, against which midnight found us still battling, because the roads were obliterated with snow, and the cruel hail, like icy needles, made our eyes for the nonce blind, still makes me shiver as I recall it, although huge logs are burning on the hearth and a brilliant January sun is flooding every corner of the room in which I write. My charioteer and I took turns at the reins, and at every two miles or so, we emulated the example of Lot's

wife, to give ourselves brief respite of a sort, without meeting, however, with her untimely fate.

Another drive hardly more agreeable was one from Butley to Snape.

Darkness found us, and it was a pitch-dark night, groping for tracks across the Wandesden Walks—and here I should like to mention that in those parts of Suffolk, within hail of the sea, the south-west winds are undoubtedly the coldest, particularly when a touch of gale is abroad. The cheery beat of the motor pulse, in comparison with the panting of breathless horses, was heaven. It is about nine years ago now that I underwent the transformation, similar to that of chrysalis to winged creature, by the substitution of a motor in place of a dog-cart or landau.

The never ending lanes, that certainly seemed to have no turnings, were converted by the automobile into delicious runs. There were breakdowns of course, but what delight one experienced when the heart of the inanimate monster began to beat again, and the longer one had waited the greater the joy. Laid up once on the Aldeburgh Road, I remarked to a passer-by, a magnificent specimen of an East Anglian fisherman, a big fair-haired Apollo—

"You're never sure of them."

"Like women," he replied.

"But when they do go you forgive them everything."

"Like women too," he muttered and proceeded on his way.

We all remember how agreeable a rencontre between a motor and ordinary vehicles was wont to be in a narrow lane or byway in the spring time of motors, before the horse had accustomed himself to what I fancy he considered that vulgar creature of the highways.

On one occasion a farmer who was driving his wife in a big, ramshackle, two-wheeled cart, implored me with uplifted arms to stop my car while the lady descended. I alighted and held the horse's head; seventeen hands high was that gaunt beast, and I felt like a tassel swinging on his bit as I watched a club-footed leg, encased in a once white stocking, making enigmatic bids for an elusive iron step.

When the owner had at last found a hold for the said foot, she was over a gate and half way across a field in a marvellously short space of time. The farmer now intimated to

me that he also wished to descend, so I continued to play the rôle of a tassel on the gaunt beast's bit, while he likewise vaulted the gate and rejoined his other half, on what they evidently considered the safer side of the fence.

I led the horse or rather was lifted by him beyond my panting car, and meeting the two further down the road, was overwhelmed with thanks that nearly merged into embraces.

"They were so sorry, they were so frightened, but they thought it might bust as they passed."

Near the same place on the road between Snape Bridge and Sternfield I beheld a spectacle which might have aroused envy within a circus master's breast.

A team drawing an empty waggon, to avoid my motor, actually ascended a bank two feet high, surmounted with a hedge of three feet, cleared this and descended successfully into the field on the other side, via a drop of four feet. As I watched the waggon ascend and then drop, the effect was that of a ship on the swell of a long undulating wave. There was, however, a moment of awful suspense before I ascertained that the men in the cart were uninjured.

Once, when starting for a forty-mile run to Assington, where I was to spend the night at the late Sir Brampton Gurdon's, I came upon a steam-car "hung up." It blocked the middle of the road, and a strong desire prompted me to examine more closely "the strange phenomenon"—as it did Pliny, when, while at the head of the Roman fleet, he perished at the age of fifty-six, in the eruption which buried Pompeii. Its owner, a martial-looking man with superfine waxed moustaches, hastened to explain that it was his first, and he devoutly hoped his last experience of the "beastly things." He was, it seemed, due at Rendlesham Hall to assist in the judging of motor competitions; there did not, however, seem the slightest likelihood of his ever arriving at his goal, as the steam car could not be left unchaperoned on the road, nor could he induce it to accompany him whither he was bound. Nor could he stop its panting, throbbing, steaming, which suggested that it might easily burst at any moment.

Although unacquainted with this manner of machine, I had plenty of time at my disposal, and therefore proposed that he should take my car, drive to Rendlesham, and send someone back in it while he fulfilled his engagement. The

offer was received in surprise and accepted with alacrity rather than with gratitude.

Whilst waiting for the car to return, my chauffeur and I sat afar, having taken the precaution of screening ourselves behind gorse bushes, for safety, and to avoid the abuse of the passers-by, who greatly resented the road being held by that driverless and menacing monster.

At length my car returned, but I do not remember ever receiving any written expression of thanks for the unpleasant *quart d'heure*, or rather four quarters of an hour, that we had spent at the steam car's palpitating side.

In the northern approach to Saxmundham there is a dangerous bit of road, under the drip of the trees near the lodge of Carlton Park, where I perceived coming south a farmer's wife, driving herself and meeting me. Expecting her to be nervous, I skirted the eastern hedge on my left too closely, and so found a heap of stones barring my course. At the rate of twenty miles an hour, a sudden turn of the steering-wheel produced an immediate nightmare-like paralysis. A stalwart labourer, on the right or west side, proceeding northwards, after turning round to stare his fill at the then comparatively novel sight of an automobile, was slouching slowly on, when suddenly his broad back seemed to be gliding on to us with that bewildering effect which trains in starting sometimes cause—when, for the life of you, you cannot say which is moving—the other or yours. Then with the gentle, but irresistible force of the said locomotives he was lifted by the two front springs of the car, as if by buffalo horns, towards the park fence. A stupendous crash, then both man and front wheels were within the park: then silence—only broken by "My Innards, oh, my Innards!" The fence was 6 ft. high wooden paling, each pale 2½ in. by ½ in. the rails 3 ins. square, with intervals of 2½ ins. between each pale and at every 10 ft. a post 4 ins. square—one of which we broke. The tar must have covered some rotten wood, or we could not have got through. Never shall I forget the scene! The wrecked car, the groaning of the man, and the instantaneous crowd of unsympathetic faces, unsympathetic not being perhaps the right word, for from the man's point of view they were sympathetic enough.

A little French story read years ago and until then by me

quite forgotten, suddenly took possession of my mind—what Romeo called "A lightning before death," it seemed to me in my misery.

It was the story of a small employé in the government, who on receiving the news of an increase in his salary rushes home to impart the glad tidings to his wife.

To celebrate the great news a holiday is planned in which "papa, maman, les deux enfants et la petite bonne" shall all participate. Papa in his extreme youth had had a few, a very few riding lessons, but as mamma, the children, and the little servant will entirely fill the carriage, it is arranged that papa shall travel *à cheval*, and "les enfants" will thus be able to witness the magnificent spectacle of papa as an equestrian.

They reach Vésinet in safety, lunch, pick wild flowers, and return to Paris in the evening, flushed with the fresh air and the pleasure of the day.

The saint, however, who in the morning had protected papa's uncertain horsemanship is evidently elsewhere engaged in the evening, for just as they are traversing the Place de la Concorde, papa's horse rears, becomes unmanageable, and before aid, human or super-human, can come to the rescue, *une vieille*, in the act of crossing the much betrafficked way, is knocked down, and does not rise again. Aid is now forthcoming, but the old lady insists that it is impossible for her to rise: a surgeon is called, who can find no outward or visible signs of damage, but she murmurs indefatigably—

"*C'est dedans. C'est dedans.*"

She is taken to a nursing home close at hand, the fees of which very soon engulf the slight increase of salary, the *raison d'être* of that joyous holiday, which had terminated so tragically.

The story concludes by Madame proposing that the old lady shall occupy the spare room in their flat, as they cannot afford to defray the expenses of the nursing home as well as those of their own *ménage*.

We, therefore, take leave of these unfortunate people, saddled for life with an old lady who always murmurs, "It is inside"—no matter what the specialists diagnose, or essay to prove to the contrary.

The story of course was written before the discovery of

Röntgen's rays! and before the enlightened days when the so-called well-to-do have to pay for every accident caused by the folly of the so-called poor. All this—every detail—and much more besides—if it can be believed—with amazing vividness and speed—flew round and round in my fancy, especially the "C'est dedans" repeated like the simple note of a bird, as I surveyed the wreckage of my car and listened to the man and the crowd, without hearing them.

"Hold up your arm," I automatically shouted. He held it up and simultaneously a flood of the most unpleasant oaths poured from his mouth, as if his arm and tongue worked in conjunction with each other. This lurid language appeared to alienate the sympathy of the crowd which up to this point had been his.

"Well," I said with relief, "you can at any rate stand, lift your arms, and shout very eloquently."

"It's my innards, my innards," he repeated, and again exhibited a vocabulary full of colour.

The two occupants of an empty manure cart which had approached during the aforegoing recital, now intervened, evidently recognizing in him a friend addicted to bibulous habits. Whether they feared that his language, which became more wonderful each moment, would land him in gaol or that he had compromised himself with the law by some fresh and novel escapade, I cannot say, but they pounced upon him, hauled him into the manure cart and jolted off with him. I breathed once more. Had the "Geni" of the brass bottle been miraculously invoked, he could not have removed a dangerous and menacing enemy more swiftly nor completely from my environment. From that day to this I have heard no more of him, though for many weeks I was haunted with the possibility, not of a visitor's room being occupied by him, but of having to make him a life allowance. Captain Price, with his usual kindness, refused to allow me to repair the fence, saying that he would gladly have it done himself, as a thankoffering for my fortunate escape from personal injury.

After this catastrophe my chauffeur became insufferable. He was master, I man. Whether he attributed the aforementioned disaster to my direction, or whether the brilliant ending to our late smash-up had robbed him of all caution,

I cannot say, but we had two rollicking months of wild and reckless driving.

Lord Somebody's infallible recipe, "picture a hundred horse-power Mercedes coming full pace round each bend on the wrong side of the road at fifty miles an hour," when quoted to him, by me, merely caused a smile of supreme superiority to curl his long upper lip, while some doggerel of my own, improvised especially for his benefit—

> "All the perils motors know,
> Vanish at the spell 'Go slow,'"

seemed to appeal to his risible faculties rather than arouse any dormant sense of caution he may have possessed. A final glorious smash-up at Ipswich, in which a pillar-box, a lamp-post, the chauffeur, the car, and myself were all involved, was the finale of his reign of terror;[1] for *he* was driving this time—not I.

On one occasion I discovered a veritable snake in the grass, when the belt-driven car in which I was driving broke down near a remote little school in the Harleston direction.

Curiously enough that very morning the village school mistress' private vice had been publicly unmasked, but would probably have continued undisturbed for some long time, had I not by fortunate chance been dropped by means of a broken car into their midst on the eventful day in question.

A boy had been sent with a note from the mistress during school hours to the shop. The unfortunate youth grasped the narrow top of the straw case—and who has not experienced the disaster that befell him?—of course the bottle slipped out—and was broken, revealing a strong smell of whisky.

The apparently deserted platform of the station, to which he also had to go and where the accident occurred, was instantly alive with people who from stationmaster to paper boy seemed intent on the salvation of that much esteemed,

[1] It was on the Wherstead Road—almost an inch deep in mud—and to avoid a tramcar going at 20 miles an hour we skidded—I lay underneath—on me the chauffeur—on him the car—and the woman who lifted me out thought that I was asking for some new drink, when half-conscious, I repeated "quits"—my chauffeur knew what I meant. Dunlop grooved tires never need skid on any Suffolk roads.

and highly prized cordial; fingers being dipped in it and then sucked, when other means of sampling it were not forthcoming.

By a desperate effort the boy saved about half a pint in the lower half of the broken bottle, and proceeded on his way, having first enveloped its tarnished glory in its original straw case He deposited it on a blank shelf, where it afforded no little anticipatory delight to the eyes of the school mistress during an hour until, at the interval, a peep being irresistible, the accident was unmasked, and the wretched boy promptly flogged before the whole school. The flogging, rather than the whisky was her undoing.

The boy's father complained, questions were asked, and that afternoon the bell was late, the mistress later, and the parson last of all.

Before the sun went down the mistress had been told to take three days in which to consider whether she would resign or be dismissed. On the third day came the letter of resignation, and the school—one of the best little village schools in England—resumed it's former course of efficiency, which her brief and lawless régime had so rudely broken.

The danger of fire is one of the many causes for the high rate of motor insurance companies. I have twice incurred that danger myself and the cost, albeit heavy, has not equalled the sum to which the insurance would have amounted during the period which covered both accidents.

In insuring, the careful pay for the careless. Forethought makes accidents almost impossible. Returning from a long journey and laid up near Easton, we injected petrol into the cylinder of a little Primus car, having first had resort to every remedy of which we could think.

No fire was near, but I imagine a spark when turning the handle must have been the cause, for the head of my stooping chauffeur suddenly became the centre of a flame, which, unlike halos, speedily spread. While he felt his head to discover how much of his hair was left, I remained transfixed by the novel and unpleasant sight of my own car in flames, and the two labourers sucking short pipes who never fail to appear on such occasions, no one knows whence or how, looked on with placid interest.

Alas, there was no sand, but the brilliant thought suddenly

presented itself to my poor brain that sandy soil might be a passing good substitute for sand. I at once attacked the neighbouring bank and began uprooting grass to reach the mould. My example fired the other three, for the two yokels once more proved what splendid Infantry Suffolk men make, if only led. Their very absence of thought tells in their favour, they never think of shirking.

At first in that sheet of flame six feet high, there were only dark spots, but soon to our delight it transformed itself into separate tongues of which each was separately choked, and at length the car lay decently interred, presenting the appearance of a big, newly made grave in the middle of the road.

A farmer, who from the top of the hill had watched our disaster without a sign of sympathy, now strode in our direction. His hatred of motors which had found expression in "let the bally thing burn to a cinder," was now mollified by the sight of so much devotion bestowed on the bally thing in question, and he expressed his condolence by towing us home at a ridiculously small charge.

The next occasion of our being tried with fire was at Thorpe near Leiston. Some petrol was seen to be escaping from the wooden shed (next to a wooden bungalow) in which the motor stood.

A new chauffeur, rejecting with contempt the cook's offer of a closed lamp with which to make investigations, struck a match and held it under the motor to discover the source of the petrol's escape.

In an instant that shed resembled the mediæval pictures of hell which are to be seen in some churches—for it was dark.

Fortunately we had plenty of sand close to hand and volunteers, including women, appeared miraculously within five minutes of the catastrophe to help extinguish the fire. In each of the instances here cited, the remedy cost more than the disease, the grit always penetrating to the innermost recesses of the complicated machinery.

In those early days of motors, when the steam roller was still considered dangerous and people had not yet begun to wonder why they had ever feared horse traffic, magistrates vouchsafed but little heed to the motorist's version of an accident.

It was, I remember well, one of those East Anglian winter mornings in February, which recall the summer. The brilliant sun lighted up the surrounding country and made one forget that the trees were leafless, the fields uncarpeted, and the banks devoid of flowers. After all, to those who have eyes, the winter colours in East Anglia, on the light land strip, often vie with the richest summer tints.

The road from Snape Church to Farnham runs east to west, and is intersected at right angles by a long lane, of which the junction is completely concealed by a cottage set amidst thick low trees and luxuriant bushes. A female in a red blouse supplied the bit of colour which art invariably introduces into landscapes, and whilst hanging out clothes she commanded a full view of both roads, enhancing the picturesqueness of the view, merely by her presence.

These pleasant ruminations were, however, most rudely disturbed by the vision for a second of a fast going horse and the next minute there was a crunch, while a shaft like a lance pierced the armour of our bonnet and locked itself deep in its side, as if cart and car had engaged in a tournament.

Who has not seen that rattling cart with five in a seat made for two, the driver one-armed, the missing limb being wound behind among the winding arms of his fellow-occupants—the loosest of loose reins—the loosest of loose trots—developing at intervals into a gallop—during one of which we unfortunately had met—the oldest and patchiest of harness, and a general atmosphere that suggested the butcher's cart and it's accompanying rush ?

My reader smiles disbelief, we were, however, running but five miles an hour and they thirteen, we on the main though narrow road, they on a side lane bearing the ill-starred name of Friday—and they were plumbers.

I wondered when that human shower would cease, as the five men breaking the lamps in their descent fell one by one on my chauffeur and self, we being doubled up beneath the miscellaneous débris—a sort of plumber jam.

The horse's head lay under my legs, and as a second's delay might be fatal, I managed to extricate myself from that heap of prone humanity and go to his assistance.

In spite of receiving a black eye which lasted three weeks, as well as three blows from his forelegs, I succeeded in holding

him down, although not one of the rest vouchsafed to lend a hand.

They recovered finally and drew out the cart, but when the horse at last stood up, one of his forelegs hung loose below the knee, broken in the attempts he had made to rise, for, though very fast, he was old and his bones very brittle.

I made the car hobble seven miles to fetch the horse's owner, who waxed eloquent on the qualities of his nag, the chief of which it appeared had been his youth.

Had our journey been long enough, that horse so to speak would have reached a minus age, for every five minutes he grew younger.

Now the red bloused female had been the first on the scene of disaster and finding that all were still alive had cried—

"Well, that's a mussy, I thought you was dead, lor' bless you, I see you both a'comin'."

"If you saw us why in the name of Heaven didn't you warn us," I asked irritably.

"Acos, sir, *you* was a'comin' so slow."

I cogitated on the importance of her as a witness for my side, as I listened to my companion's continued diatribes on his horse's particular merit of youth, during the return drive. Therefore, on arriving at the point of wreckage, I immediately turned to her and asked—

"What did you say to me an hour ago? please repeat it!" She, however, straightway held her peace. I repeated my question and finally elicited "What about?"

"Did'nt you say my car was coming very slowly," was my exasperated rejoinder.

She laughed stridently, "Call that slow?" was the only response I could get. So much for my chief witness.

I then questioned the chief plumber, whose face was bleeding, and said "Another case of violent motor-driving, eh?"

"No, sir, you warn't comin' fast, but quietly—you hadn't blowed the hooter."

On inquiry this proved to be true; alas my case was nil, though needless to say the horn could not possibly have averted the catastrophe, nevertheless it should have been blown and we were in fault.

I drew a cheque for £20 on the spot, the horse's owner

and his head man (the chief plumber), whilst imbibing whiskey at my expense, pronounced me most emphatically to be a gentleman. The distinction, though gratifying, had I felt, been rather dearly bought and recalled to my mind certain patents of nobility.

The newspaper account ran :—"The motor car dashed into Mr F.'s conveyance injuring the horse to such an extent that it had to be killed. Mr F. and *one* or *two* others who were with him escaped unhurt."

Nota Bene.—Mr F. was not there! The cart contained five occupants. The hole being in the side of the bonnet proved that they ran into us. Reckless driving with a loose rein was the cause of the accident.

The aforegoing is a summary of unvarnished facts which will hardly be credited to a motorist!

One evening late in October, having succumbed to the temptation of advancing the spark to speed us on our homeward journey, after a long, slow day we found ourselves laid up near Hoxne.

Every horse in the place, it appeared, had been taking part in the threshing, and one did not seem procurable for us. At last, however, a steed, Rude Donatus, after a laborious career of twenty years in a carrier's van, was available, and with him a septuagenarian, a boy and a ramshackle, two-wheeled drover's cart, the bolts and fastenings of which promised to give way before the journey's end.

It took us four hours to cover fourteen miles. The old man wore no overcoat in spite of a keen and frosty wind; now and again he would relinquish the reins to the boy while he strolled leisurely to inspect the still ungathered crops in the moonlight, and overtook the cart quite comfortably without bestirring himself in the least.

Our pace was slow, it would however, have been much slower, but for the boy who first directing the old man's attention to some particular crop on the far side of the road occasionally urged the horse by means of the whip into an unwilling trot.

I did not, however, encourage such efforts on his part, as my chief anxiety was, that the horse would expire, or the cart drop to pieces before we reached our journey's end. I therefore shouted at intervals to the septuagenarian, "Don't

hurry," a piece of politeness received by him I am afraid as sarcasm.

At length came the memorable retort, his sole contribution to whatever conversation took place during that lengthy drive. His oracular reply, which I guard in my memory as a phylactery, and which might serve as a mascot to the many was—

"I ain't a'goin' to hurry, I'm a'goin' to git there."

We did "git there" at last and that tough old Englishman, with his contempt of a great coat was one to be remembered. He had already done a day's work at a stack when he came to our assistance, and eight hours erect in a cart in comparison with which an Irish jolting car may be said to glide, was hardly a suitable finish to a septuagenarian's day. Nothing would induce him, however, to accept more than 7s. 6d. and we parted with the warmest of hand shakes.

I estimate I have travelled a distance equivalent to five times round the world, in motor and dog-cart, etc., besides twice round in trains. I was called "the man of many parts," because I insisted on motoring with duplicates of everything—myself included if I could—I had narrow strips of carpet for stony roads. A good ordinary ulster with a light overcoat underneath, if needed, can be manipulated without the sudden changes of fur; and the turned up collar should have a lappet, or it only concentrates draughts.

The average man is ignorant of the principle of the double breast. Unless you button the leeward side, an overcoat resembles a bird's feather coating or a tiled roof turned upside down, catching, instead of carrying off the weather. A special difficulty of posting is caused by the driver's mistaken notion that alcoholic stimulants sustain warmth—coupled with his being obliged so often to put up at the inn.

After night schools there is a tendency for his elbow to lean unduly my way—and then, dangerously the other way. Temperance Hotels I believed in, until I found that they are not seldom conducted by people who have lost their licence through intemperance. The proprietor of a ginger beer and lemonade business I know, made himself and his man drunk, and they were found on their return locked in deadly fight in his own stables. But the story I heard in Lancashire of Prince Lee's coachman proves that the mis-

chievous idea that alcohol fortifies against exposure is not confined to livery stables. That individual having become intoxicated in the servants' hall of the house, to which he had driven the Bishop out to dinner, had to be bundled inside the episcopal carriage, the bishop himself mounting the box to handle the pair in the wintry darkness. The porter at the Palace lodge, peering inside at midnight and seeing no one—the coachman having collapsed on to the mat—shouted to the Bishop :—

" Eh, mon, but what a yer done wi' t' ould divil ? "

An Oxford undergraduate many years ago recommended me a plan to ensure punctual arrival at Liverpool Street—

" Put half-a-crown on each end of the train." The last time he tried it, he told me, nothing more than violent jolting and scared faces happened up to Ipswich ; but at Ipswich, after a scamped stoppage, just as the wheels glided on, his door was wrenched open by the convulsively clutching hands of a fat bagman who travelled first class, and the rest of whose body was dragging behind. In a second the undergrad. had that anything but attractive bosom clasped as tightly to his own as any lover ever clasped his love ; but to his horror it was he who was yielding, not the fat man. How it happened that he did not descend to that receding platform is one of the mysteries of his life. He supposes one of the fat man's feet, like Noah's dove, must have found a solid purchase, when all seemed flowing movement. Fast embraced, they rolled together *in* instead of *out*. The relief of it ! but stretched at full length the fat man moaned " *I am dying—Brandy*," and of course the undergrad. had emptied his flask long before, and it was not the halcyon days of corridor, and there was no stoppage till London, and they were alone.

The fat man closed his eyes : and the undergrad. had waking nightmare of inevitable detection, and manslaughter. He would not die at once ; but live long enough to whisper to the horrified London officials the words he muttered at intervals now—" two minutes to the good—I had two minutes to the good—warned by doctors not to hurry—started before the time—positively certain—business man—I shall die—damages——dam—ages. . . . ."

It was not till Liverpool Street that that bagman had,

by dint of their prostration, so far recovered his equanimity as to yield to the exhilarating effects of a cab-crowded terminus, and drive off—adding his own to the growler's growls as he went.

The usual troubles of stuffy or draughty carriages have fallen to my lot; and the ready answer of that same healthy-looking undergrad. to an old bachelor fidget is worthy of record—

"May I have one window a little open, sir," said the undergrad.

"I have a cold."

"All right, sir, as you wish; but I ought to mention that my lungs are far gone in tuberculosis."

The window was immediately opened.

Among rare travelling companions, I may mention Dr Jameson. A face which newspaper portraits did not enable me to recognize, was buried in blue-books—and an extremely interesting conversation begun by him à propos of the want of artesian wells in the Lowestoft district, where he had been staying, was terminated by an unfortunate remark on my part: "and that reminds me of South Africa, and that blithering idiot Jameson, who has stirred up all this trouble by his wretched raid." The air was then full of the Boer War. He relapsed into silence and his books; and at Ipswich I discovered the cause.

Travelling once with the late Sir Richard Wallace,—the most generous and handsome of men, and a general—I learned to what base uses Toadyism reduces even a general. He actually squatted on the elbow rests in his excitement.

I was introduced to the late Sir Claude de Crespigny in a railway carriage. The kind-hearted baronet who shouldered his own pet "pigskin" was *en route* for Bungay, accompanied by a cousin of my wife, both riding their own horses in the races there. No saint, not even that rapt pilgrim of this short-sighted age—the golfer—bogey-crazed—could have exhorted me more earnestly to forsake my foolish ways and give myself again to steeple chasing—to feed no more on the husks—smelly motors and stuffy schools—above all, on no account, to be tempted to suffer the daily gallop to lapse into desuetude—and so forth.

A motorist's dread of overloading his car once proved

disastrous to me who prided myself on very miniature luggage. After a very long run I was awakened from an ante-dinner nap in the late Lord Lieutenant's beautiful place at Assington, where I was staying the night, by the butler and footman who were unpacking my things. Two men for so small a job appeared superfluous—and I was devoutly hoping that my servant at home had packed correctly—when an exclamation of pain escaped the butler, who left my bedroom precipitately.

The dinner party's spirits were hopelessly damped by the absence of the butler; and whispers about lockjaw, however veiled, would keep reaching my ear.

It was not till next morning that the suspense was relieved and I learned that my safety razor blade was the offender. It will not be left out of its case again.

CHAPTER X

STAYING OUT

I HAVE known the parsons of Lancashire and Suffolk, and say what men will about "black slugs," etc. I ever found many of them hard working and all of them warmhearted and generous, to the extent of their means—means cruelly crippled, by reformation-pillage. Take them for all in all, we shall not see their like again. Perhaps, weakened as they often are by isolation, they may have shown a tendency to drift upwards in their social sympathies, but how many a real good sort have I known, who has slaved at the night school (for example), until he found that the lads took it as a favour to him, thinking it somehow brought grist to his mill. Naturally he had to drop it, awaiting their request to have it revived, which request, thanks to demagogues and chapels, never came. Ever kind, interested, and even loving has been the welcome extended to me by the clergy, and many a happy time have I spent in their homes. All I know is that if there was a wrong to be redressed, of all three classes, theirs has ever been the one that viewed the case disinterestedly and on enlightened principles of kindness and justice. From their doors rarely has my appeal for the good of education and the poor turned empty away; a statement I could not make about either the class above them, or below.

The parents, alas, have only an eye for present returns—pecuniary. The Squires often away from home, or occupied with county affairs, or, naturally, influenced by their tenants the farmers, or from other causes, can scarcely be called enthusiastic in the matter. The doctors rank next to the clergy. The Church is still as it ever was, the truest friend of the poor.[1] Nor must the village innkeeper lack his word

[1] "Voltaire was the intellectual forerunner of the critical and destructive side of the French Revolution. He represents its scepticism its

of praise ; many a pleasant hour have I spent in his neat and peaceful, though miserably victualled inn. The stream of life, such as it is, keeps alive the intellectual sympathies of " mine host " and a genial companion he is, though does his and his company's grievous misunderstanding of the rectory folks' ways, suggest the existence in miniature in every hamlet of two public houses, the house of God and the house—of someone else—only, of course, sometimes ?

Yet in one case, the innkeeper stood alone with me, against parson, farmers and squire, in ridding the village of an inefficient schoolmaster, who, by organ-playing and connivance at irregularities, had won the hearts of all but that brave publican. The unworthy motives imputed by jealousy and ignorance to the dispensing of hospitality to an Inspector, may be ignored. The pleasant relations so established, do more to pave the way to improvements in the school, than your cynical officer, who skulks with his sandwich under a hedge, will ever compass.

To the few people who hope by a good meal to win a good report, I hinted that the Inspector wrote his report afterwards, when the effects of rich viands, etc., were in the full swing of digestion—or one should rather say, indigestion.

In one house two sorts of pickles were kept, especially for inspection time, one for the Diocesan, and the other for the government Inspector. When sounded there as to my

hatred of the Church, and its contempt for authority," writes Symes who though a friend of so-called liberty admits there was much exaggeration in the accounts given of the misery of the French people previous to the Revolution. In my experience it is the earnest parson and not the slacker who is most likely to be hated.

" It is difficult." continues Symes—" to exaggerate the services which the Church had rendered to France and indeed to Europe for twelve centuries. She had been the builder up of civilization and education the guardian of morality and literature, the sustainer of the weak, the check on the strong. Her services had been almost priceless."

> " Freeze, freeze, thou bitter sky
> Thou dost not bite so nigh as man's ingratitude."

We have in Portugal an example of this wholesale devastation of Church property, in our own times. Those monasteries, at the windows of which the soldiers awaited the priests, rifle in hand, as if shooting rats, existed mainly for the good of the poor. Is it likely the Church would, after 1200 years, suddenly deteriorate—except in the eyes of those who greedily coveted her well-earned and well-spent wealth ?

taste in pickles, I replied, "I love them—but by the time I write the report they will be disagreeing with me." The subject of pickles was never mentioned again.

But though, my clergy friends, I have "to return you many thanks," as Suffolk people say—I am sure you will not mind laughing with me at a few exceptional experiences. Like figures, in manuals on golf, showing how *not* to do it, they may, by indicating what should *not* have been, facilitate realization of what should be, and was—the latter constituting far and away the larger proportion. In other words, they will help to express my profound gratitude for the delightful hospitality I have so often enjoyed, and for the many friends I have made.

I was once entertained by a clergyman, long since gone to his rest, who had been imprisoned in a wooden cage in China, like that exhibited at the banqueting hall of Whitehall. Everybody knows how the *ménage* deteriorates when the servants rule supreme—hams marked with newspaper print, very seedy seed-cake, mousy carpet, half-eaten tart crusts that had done service before, newly replenished with tinned fruit, etc., etc.—These were the mercies for which we thanked God in prayers, through which—under a most lugubrious delivery—we petitioned for joyful hearts, journeying mercies, etc., etc. All sorts of societies, like that for the conversion of the Jews, were liberally supported, but the schools—that is the manufactory of little Christian children at home, were, like the housekeeping, starved. But the so-called dinner, at six, took the cake. Cold viands—coldly furnished forth what might have been a pleasant meal, had it but consisted of good honest bread and cheese, with some moisture still remaining in them. The aged rector, with his long white beard, sits solemnly before his knife handles, which are covered with old, grey and dirty stocking material like mittens to prevent his contracting a chill by contact with a cold surface.

I see him now, with three or four layers of grey shawl, and two skull-caps. I have actually made him laugh, and off comes one layer. He talks—and then another layer, he eats, and soon positively all are off. Alas! I cannot keep it up—gradually, they are all put on again, for who can make an ordinary person laugh all the dinner-time much less a melancholy though courteous, and kind old gentleman.

His head somehow reminds me of a conjuror's box with covers fitting so closely as to make no difference when they come off. I do my best; but his sadly reproachful look as he has to put them on again one by one, is the cruellest snub—but one—to my conversational powers I ever sustained. For a blissful moment I had had them all off, but it had been impossible to retain so halcyon a condition of affairs. I retired to my slumbers, feeling like a sort of human stove that has to warm a damp and chilly bedroom, and that with a body barely supplied with good fuel enough to keep itself warm.

The other snub occurred years after, when I was asked out to a dinner party in order to entertain the great, but blind, Mr Fawcett. I did my best; but after he had completed an elaborate disquisition on the East Anglian roads,—a disquisition which showed more observation than any other man who had eyes could have displayed—he became very silent—and then, to my utter disgrace, everyone saw him lean over me, as my driver sometimes used to lean in a dog-cart after a night school, but from a different cause. Mr Fawcett was asleep!

A former vicar of Southwold who was preaching for a brother clergyman in Lowestoft was under the impression—so he told me—that the light meal he partook of before the evening service was only a preliminary affair. It proved to be the only evening meal. On retiring to bed, mindful of his boyish story-books, he tied a towel round his waist, to allay the pangs of hunger, but on thrusting his feet between the cold sheets he found them to be bristling with sharp crumbs. It afterwards transpired, that the Bishop had spent the previous night there and his lordship, having learned what poor housekeepers some of the best people in the world are, had gone prepared.

Under the old system of Inspection I had some curious lunches. Here is a Lancashire one:—

Country Farmer. "Good-day, woant thee coom in and have a bit dinner."

I. "Thanks, I am hungry." Not wishing to be thought "saucy," I endeavour to cope with the huge helping of beef; they hate you to look "saucy." At my side is a mug containing about a pint, is it milk? I taste mine—if it is milk it is very rich, and sickeningly sweet, but he has been so

kind, I mustn't look "saucy." By steady efforts I am half through, and then three-quarters; the beef is gone and I begin to feel very uncomfortable. To me almost unable to move—enter the pudding.

Cries the farmer, "Lassie wilt bring the booter to the puddin'—where's the booter to puddin'."

"Ay," says she—"but I brought it, I know I brought it."

"Nay, but thee couldna' ha."

"Yea, but I did." Search amongst the numerous mugs of the numerous sons, and then roars of laughter at finding that I had drunk the sweet sauce for the pudding.

"Thee should ha' sooped it a' oop," cried the heavy youths, "then thee wouldna' ha' been found out."

A Brighton curate, pleasant and correct, becomes a rector in a small Suffolk town. Being rather socially than scholastically strong, he has a horror of Inspection, and is usually engrossed in finding the hymns for next Sunday until his hymn-book is stuffed full of slips of paper. One cannot but entertain the idea that he is nervous lest one of the questions, which fill the air, might glance off one of the children and pierce him.

The Rectory, which flanks the road, faces north; commanding a magnificent view of river scenery—and it is February. The drawing-room firegrate, an old-fashioned draught breeder, is painted a hideous colour, and in flowery frames, over the mantelpiece, hang a pair of enlarged photos, one the Bishop, the other the Rector. A third photo is my first introduction to his wife, the frame covered with ribbons. Of course she pronounces her name contrary to the spelling, and of course I, unwittingly, annoy her by pronouncing it as spelt. There is about a handful of fire just lit, and two large north windows in the drawing-room. Would they would ask me into the kitchen! How well I know that swish of the match that lights the fire while the visitor takes his coat off in the hall.

The dining-room, which confronts you on the right as you enter the street door, has the latch broken, and the north-easter across the marsh simply plays with that street door; while the sham fire, not much larger than a salt cellar, with its reddening gaslit cinders, false and cold as the cupboard love which prompts my welcome, reminds one of the opossum

when it saw the dead shot. "Don't trouble to kill me," it seems to say to the draught. "I'll come down of myself."

The hall door is ever being opened for soup tickets. That winding river will be my winding sheet. I am already cold up to my knees. Dare I ask for hot grog?

Mrs Rector, a large person with a large picture hat, a large mouth and a smart tight-fitting frock, asks, "What will you drink?"

"May I ask for hot milk and water?"

"Oh, yes; I forgot, they told me you always liked messes."

"My dear!" interposes the grant-minded Rector in horror-stricken accents—

"Well, I *do* like that, why you yourself told me he drank some loathsome mixture!"

"My *dear*! . . .

To prevent a domestic scene, I dash in, where angels would fear to tread, with—

"So sorry to give trouble, I am so feeble you know, though I fear my appearance belies me."

"Oh no, you look it," is her remark. Why do we hate other people saying what we don't mind saying ourselves? "Has that stoopid girl gone for the stuff?" The rector's well-bred chin is buried in his chest, and I pity him from the bottom of my heart.

A loud crash on the stairs breaks in upon this festive scene. Had the nursery gate, which I had observed at the head of the stairs, given way? Of course, they had had about a dozen children in about as many years.

She. "There you sit, you don't care, not you; if they every one perish."

He. "It's only the ordinary noise."

She. "Ordinary?—hark! *will* you go?"

He goes: meanwhile she to me: "Do you like Byron?"

"Fairly well!"

"Oh, I love Byron, I adore him, I'm devoted to him, I could do without breakfast and dinner if I only had Lalla Rookh."

During the rector's absence, a mass of cod had been placed on the table and from the smoke which, as I am to leeward, envelopes me in its fumes, I gather not only that it is East

Anglian, but that it has left its freshness far behind. The rector returns, but is not left long in peace.

"If I don't know Charlie's cry, I don't know who does!"

I wistfully thought of hunting days, being once more reminded of the huntsman's skill in detecting each hound's tongue. "You know what the doctor says, why don't you go—not you—what do you care?"—another bang. "Will I excuse him?" he asks, "nurse is away."

A mass of half raw beef replaces the cod; a joint unlike anything I had ever before seen; this in its turn is speedily dismissed and then in exactly the same languishing voice in which she had inquired my sentiments concerning Byron, the rector's wife asks me "Do you like hominy?"

"Oh, yes, I think so," I reply politely.

"I love hominy, I adore hominy, I'm devoted to it, I could eat it all day."

A sullen mass, like a gigantic chrysalis, with creases on its smooth back, sweeps in. I watched her engulf lump after lump of this nauseous compound, and words of the poet she had praised so enthusiastically occurred to my mind—

> "Oh that we can call these creatures ours,
> But not their appetites."

"I've given up the porridge battle with my children," she told me, interspersing with conversation the interludes between each mouthful; "it's so unpleasant to have fights at meals,—I suppose you've given up everything by this time."

"My dear!" again from her husband. The hominy was superseded by a small tart in double harness with an indescribable mess in a glass dish.

"Why did I wink at you," to her husband, "it's all very well, you know, how I catch it after they've gone, if YOU didn't have the nicest bits . . ."

At last in darts that most faithful of the faithful, the sixteen year-old "general," all apron, cap and good will. The radiance of her somewhat dirty face was destined, however, to be dimmed, for her mistress seeing the soda water tumbler in her hand, and the lurid yellow tinge betraying its contents exclaims, "You silly girl, you!"

Her answer, "Please Ma'am, I thought you meant treacle

posset," so stirred my pity that I seized the flagon and gulped down the sickly mixture at one long draught.

My reward for this heroic conduct was anyhow a pleasant sensation of warmth, which hitherto had been lacking in my system. But my mind echoed Romeo's exclamation, after the apothecary's draught; "Oh, true apothecary! thy drugs are quick!" Outside, the wind was howling and the rain coming down in torrents, but it is better to be in the hands of God than man—I fled.

What a genuine saint, I thought on my homeward journey, must our Bishop be, for I had been given very pointedly to understand—he stayed there. This lady, I afterwards understood was great on praying cloth at Mothers' Meetings—American cloth recommended as it kept cleaner in the pocket.

A propos of the swish of a match, I was once lighting my pipe in the den of the late Rev. Charles Steward, but before the match touched the box a distinct swish sounded. In a cold perspiration, with the idea that overwork was affecting my brain, I repeated the operation and was in the depth of despair when my eye caught sight of a large covered cage behind me. It was the parrot!

A certain rector, after a thrilling tragic story of the fates of two young men who had both slept in damp beds, ushered me into a bedroom where my breath, like Landseer's picture of the stag in The Challenge, produced a mist: "No one has slept in this room," he told me cheerily, "for three months—but it's much longer than that since anyone slept in the other spare room where we've put my wife's mother."

But if cold houses kill their hundreds, scanty, ill-cooked and tinned-food meals kill their thousands. It is not poverty but ignorance, meanness, false pride, etc., things which need not be, that I would ridicule. The mistress has not necessarily to live in her kitchen to inspire it.

I am a fortunate man; but even in my happy household a loaf I brought home as a specimen of home-made bread had to be gradually demolished by myself, as no one else would touch it; and when I praised other people's light puddings the answer was "you can do anything with eggs." As a matter of fact one egg is sufficient, and soaking over night, which costs neither time nor labour nor money, produces a result which no longer resembles a miniature pebble

beach. Similarly in vain, though for years, I have preached the semi-perpendicular and not horizontal position of the sticks for lighting a fire, on the analogy of a match and a person in flames. The former should be vertically held, the latter horizontally, for obvious reasons.

In some houses where I have stayed, my feelings have been best described by my driver's whisper to me—at one of them :—

" The mare's a' shriekin' in the stables to get home."

Salad dressings like white hair-mixture, gone yellow at the top, poultice-like puddings and pigeon pies in whose black interior mysterious solids soak and soak, but never soften, are unnecessary evils. So are the withered ends of tongue, that have lost all taste like people who have had influenza. Bacon need not resemble corrugated iron roofing, and the milk for coffee need not be cold.

At one house we sat down to dinner with one pigeon for five—and before I had recovered from the shock, I found myself politely asked to carve—a most ingenious way out of the difficulty—and would I give the first help to a mother-in-law upstairs! I have a dazed recollection of a leg coming back to me after I had sent it round, and my feelings then must have been something like those of the five thousand when the miracle had been performed.

At another house I remember my hostess audibly whispering to her husband who was about to yield to the shame of microscopic sections, rather than slices, "He can come again, he can come again."

" Mr Horse-Pond," cried one of these hostesses to my Sub-inspector, whose name is neither horse nor pond, " your plate is very dry." And then to me, " How is Mrs Swinburne? Are both the girls well ? " (I have two sons) " Let me see, you take milk." Then an audible whisper to Mary, " from the baby's bottle—never mind about straining it,"—and then aloud to me, " We always have plenty of milk going here."

Painful too, is the hostess who when her husband is proposing a list of drinks for my choice—his only idea being that the one he offers is not strong enough—looks round the side of the centre table plant, which is remote from me and whispers, " My dear, don't tempt him." An abstemious man in these days is apt to be credited with a past, and he

finds his gift of temperance as much mistaken as a lady I know did when everyone took her splendid set of natural teeth, preserved to very old age—for false ones.

In Lancashire once my hostess murmured with an exquisitely refined lisp, over the blancmange, "Will you take some more mould? Pray forgive my husband's Lancashire brogue he actually called it 'shape,' just now." As I had been, so to speak, biting the dust all my visit there, her name for it was really suitable. Her charming little daughter must of course find vent for a spoiled character in loquacity, "Oh, mother, I did not know it was this beautiful shape you were making in the kitchen this morning." This gave the show away, but affectation in manner dies hard, and the lady soon recovered.

But preserve me from houses where private lunatics are taken. I remember one in Lancashire who used to cover his face at meals and groan. He was not violent as a rule I was told, and a little social intercourse might do him good. Now I object to being turned into a sort of assistant lunatic keeper. There was also a female decidedly peculiar. The groan of that lunatic was not misplaced over such starvation rations, and we all had our eyes riveted on the only hopeful viand, some jam puffs, but alas! we all came in bad seconds to the peculiar one, who whisked them off almost before the meat was finished; for had they not come in her paper bag, and were they not her private property? The hostess, the rector's maiden sister, who had a fat fox terrier half round her neck like the lamb in Millais' picture of the shepherd, is bewailing the misconduct of a male pupil teacher, whose fault amounted to nothing more than having been seen out in the dark accompanied by a female ditto. Just as I am thinking what she (my hostess) and the peculiar one, who cordially agrees with her, would both have given to be similarly situated with a handsome curate on my left, I was startled by a deep groan, which exactly expressed my sentiments, from the lunatic on my right.

"Nothing can prosper if this sort of thing goes on," add the spinsters. Another sepulchral groan.

Is he a lunatic after all?

Presently I think I am interesting the hostess—after all she is not so bad, she can take in a good descrip——"Jane,

did Jack eat his dinner—all of it—(Forgive me, Mr Swinburne, but it's my dog's first day of dining at six), and Jane, pour Mr Colney-Hatch's left ginger beer into the bottle — don't spill it, silly girl, and—put the shabbiest Bibles out for the Mothers' Meeting—don't light a fire (it was January) lock up the sideboard and bring me the——" My hostess has vanished. My graphic description has fallen to the floor—stillborn! Now I see the meaning of the limp string over the corks of the ginger-beer bottles out of which the liquor so tamely wobbles.

On another occasion the rector had told me not to wait for him at lunch, but I did not expect a *tête à tête* with the same lunatic, formidable through his height, size and strength, coupled with rumours in the air of a recent violent outbreak. There was no fear as long as Jane the parlour-maid stayed in the room—though I wished he would not keep toying with his knife—the blade of which, worn down to dagger shape, had become shorter than the handle—but quite long enough to make an end of me, as I could not help reflecting, especially as I was hopelessly cooped up in an oriel window recess from which his big body barred all escape. He had a most alarming habit of remaining silent for what seemed like a quarter of an hour—and then removing his hand from his brow, rising to his feet, leaning over you and jerking out an answer without looking up—when you had forgotten the question. In reality when not in his moods, he was kind and courteous, but alas! I did not know it till afterwards.

At length the parlour-maid left us with the sweets, and I faintly asked in the most conciliatory tones, "Will you have some more tart?" No reply—the tension momentarily increasing to an unbearable point when suddenly he leapt up with a "No, thank you," so loud and unexpected that it all but sent me flying through the glass at my back, and the rector entering at that moment found the perspiration still on my brow.

Curiously enough some six months after, when calling on the rector on school business, I was ushered into the drawing-room into which in about five minutes a frock-coated and middle-aged doctor-like individual was admitted. "Do you like it here?" he asked. "Oh, yes," I replied somewhat surprised. "Are you quite comfortable?" "Certainly,"

(somewhat coldly) and so on, until it became evident that he had mistaken me for the lunatic—a natural mistake my readers will say—but so diverting to me that for the life of me I could not resist the temptation of keeping it up as long as possible, until the rector's roars of laughter exposed me—to the discomfiture of my urbane companion whose first visit it was.

On yet another occasion my escape was really a narrow one. A curate had been "let out," after a year's confinement for homicidal tendencies, on the (to my mind) idiotic principle of sacrificing the good of the many to that of the few, *i.e.* by letting loose on society persons who have once betrayed such tendencies, forsooth, in the hope that it may effect a cure. Dining with a neighbouring rector I met the said curate, and his charming description of Oxford boat-race days, Regent Street shopping, the latest novels and plays, etc. filled our hostess with pleasure, which she showed so evidently that when she left us at dessert, the curate (to the rector's and my amazement) rose and followed her. Beyond this he betrayed no sign of erratic behaviour, except perhaps playing with his dinner knife, which he somehow managed to retain till dessert, and with the said knife in hand, button-holing my dress coat on the hearthrug, just before he left the room, when he whispered in a very strange voice, "I have seen you in a fur coat; I don't like fur coats." He then strode out of the room and nothing more happened that night, but in a few days' time he murdered his rector. Next time I met the rector with whom I dined on that occasion, he said, "You had a lucky escape, fortunately for you you went off next morning, or it might have been you."

Though appointed to continue in harness till the age of sixty-five I had to retire at sixty-three. This was unreasonable; but the other extreme is worse, and the clergy go on too long. One dear old man whom everybody loved, used to tumble down like the tin soldiers I played with as a boy, and as often as he fell I used as tenderly to replace him on his feet. The wife long gone, the servant housekeeper rules, and even his magisterial duties fail to draw him out at last.

The chest of drawers and the washstand in my room are a sort of caper-sauce colour, the cheap iron bedstead has

hard curtains that will not draw—stuffy and made of cheap stuff—there is a screen more staring even than the staring wall-paper—a sportsman deerstalking—a fat woman being carried across a brook—Osmund Pasha with much saluting and many becoming caps, etc., etc. Why do they fascinate one's eye? There is a faded Landseer's Newfoundland dog in a maple frame, a wreath of colourless flowers, a youth with a Byronic collar (both amateur efforts whose chief value is in the unnecessary length of cord), a Christmas card with a text and a missionary box, etc, etc. The room is tidy; but—you cannot say why—the one thing that room lacks is—comfort. His sanctum is cosier, two old 'cellos and a purring cat, with a neatly folded *Times*, the idols of his solitude, help matters there, but the ivy-towered missionary boxes have found their way even there. A chunk of East Anglian cod starts the dinner. Even the net it was caught in would be less stringy; and at least would have some taste about it, even if it were only of the sea; the sauce is paste, blushing pink at its own deception. Then beef olives. "Will I have some more stuffing?" Though I hate stuffing I assent, for stuffing that attempts to penetrate such sinewy folds must be worth tasting. Then stewed pears—what tree could produce such a pear? Whence that grit at the core? The pallid yellow custard, made of custard powder and seemingly bent on analysing itself back to the component elements from which it never really departed, almost finishes me. The dessert follows, looking like Museum specimens of common or garden fruits. All the hardness of the cod, the beef, and the pear live again in that lumpy mattress; and the church clock striking the hours almost in my window, arrest my downward course as I glide all night from a slippery height towards an almost carpetless floor.

And now sing, muse, that terrible encounter when I had to play the part of Jack the Giant-killer, but without his courage and skill.

The Shotley peninsula, the lake district of Suffolk, where, after so often seeing from dog-cart or motor the sun climb above the mists of dawn, I have ceased to wonder either at Anne Boleyn's love of Erwarten—where her heart was, by her special request, deposited—or at the Greek fable of Ana-

dyomene rising out of the sea—this peninsula has almost as beautiful a northern neighbour, which may be called the Felixstowe peninsula. In this peninsula stands one of the show-places of England.

Royalty used to honour its "shoots," and the distracted clergyman at those times had to face the parents, who complained that though they might not themselves have their children to supplement their modest earnings, the millionaire colonel might have them to brush, that is, to play the cheap beater, when he pleased. "Was this England," etc.? "Why not lay the matter before him?" I suggested; "he is a perfect gentleman, just, enlightened, and good." "We dare not. He might not take it well, and then—why—there might not be one of us who could live on here."

Now I loved that parson—handsomer at eighty than most men at forty are. He was one with whom to stay was an education, social, moral, and religious—and so for him I offered to beard the lion in his den. The rector took an affectionate leave of me under the frowning Park gateway, and after being led through many corridors, I found myself face to face with a commanding figure—commanding even in that vast morning gown of many colours—topped with many folds of neck wraps. It was something to gain access at all, and A.M. was not a good time for him, but I counted on a surprise. So far well; but somehow I experienced in that awful presence the terrified sensation which I felt at the foot of Vesuvius which we had determined to ascend, though "dangerously active" was the description of the volcano in that day's newspaper. The ground burned under my feet, but I could not meet the icy stare on that purple face. "Well?" was his first remark. "I know you love justice," I began, "and your widespread reputation for equity encourages me to——" "For God's sake, tell me at once—are you here to preach a sermon? Have I not, O Heaven! enough to bear with in the parsons—must even laymen—will you—come—to the point—or——" he moved towards the bell. I anticipated him by moving in that direction. "I was only trying to——" "The point, the point," he shouted. "Very well then, have it. The parents may *not* have their children from school for work, and you *may*—for pleasure. Is the law of England different to them and you?"

"Are we in Turkey?" he roared. Never had I more difficulty in suppressing the answer on my tongue, "Yes, and *you* are the Sultan," but I did suppress it, and a lengthened experience has always proved to me that one sentence unspoken is in the end more effectual than fifty spoken.

Another rush to the bell—also intercepted, "Do not trouble to ring, I can let myself out." "Sit down. What is your name? Hand me that pen" (a quill with the nib broad enough to be a brush). What awfully thick letters he writes! "I know all your heads at Whitehall (scribbling furiously); is not tact one of the qualifications of H.M. inspector? The Lord President dines with me to-morrow. Have you a wife, children any other means of living ——?" "I have tried to do my duty—I am sorry if I have . . . they were frightened to . . ."

Another rush at the bell, but my hand was on the door handle, and with what was meant for a courteous bow I was gone, though not to the hall door. My state of mind was unequal to re-threading that maze. I was eventually found by a shirt-sleeved footman in one of the pantries, my heart beating like a bird's that has flown into a room and cannot escape — visions of two starving sons mocking my eyes. The parson met me open-armed; but it was not till next morning I could summon courage to fulfil my engagement with the Colonel's astronomer (a kind and sympathetic school manager) to look through that gigantic telescope at the top of the observatory. On the parson's reiterated assurance that the Colonel had gone to town (was it to the Board of Education?) I stole up, and after two delightful hours descended the winding stair to have the current of my veins frozen by a voice at the foot, "Who's up there? Is it you, Mr Glass?" There was no other exit. Mr Glass was far up—out of hearing. My step had betrayed me. Another roar transfixed me with something of the feelings a rabbit must experience when a ferret enters his burrow and there is no bolt-hole available. Providence must have intervened, for, why or wherefore to this day I know not, his roar died away in the distance after the manner of a retreating lion, and I escaped.

Moral. The parson wrote me a few days after that all the keepers had received strict orders, in the Colonel's own hand-

writing, there was to be no more children brushing on any account. Possibly the conciliatory suggestion, quite unheeded at the time, viz., that the shoots should be regarded as gala-days, when a holiday might be given by the managers, took effect after I left.

But to return to humbler homes.

When I need anything in some of the houses I visit I hesitate to ring the bell, first, because punctuality cannot be taught in a day, and secondly because I should probably see a girl with a hole in her pinafore, which, like the holes in my own stockings, always puts me into the bad temper of a man who has been a failure.

All these years of patching and darning in the schools, and I responsible, and yet these holes! I have almost at times gone so far as to wish the mushrooms at breakfast were the toadstools they closely resemble that I might for ever cease from visiting miseries—not the least of this world's trials. However, in one house where I had no hot water, and I had to shave, I looked for the bell. The hook was there, but the rope was gone, and where the rope should have been an amateur illumination confronted me: "Let your requests be made known unto God." I could hardly pray for shaving water, so I did without.

In another house, where Mosheim's "Principles of Christianity" lay on the table and a piece of used soap was in the soap-dish "Wash me and I shall be clean" was the wall illumination, but there was no bath, not even under the bed.

In another house, over an awful enlarged photo of my host's wife hung the scroll, "Cast thy burden on the Lord."

"Rejoice in the Lord always" is often to be found in lonely houses, and I should not have a word to say if the occupants even "imitated," to use a Suffolk expression, to be cheerful and bright.

Raising my eyes in the dining-room, where the hostess was abusing everybody and everything, and irritated by the insolence of a spoiled child, I read, "As for me and my house, etc."

Humility is a virtue, but there is no need to post up in the dining-room, "Oh, wondrous power of Love Divine. . . . It . . . embraces even me."

An Exeter Hall old colonel once, in reply to a business

letter, sent me a post card with the following lines printed in the place generally occupied by the address:—

> "That Thou shouldst love a wretch like me,
> Yet be the God Thou art,
> Is darkness to my intellect,
> But sunshine to my heart."

I could hardly direct my reply to so long an address, and I fully agree with the wonder in both cases, but I comfort myself with the reflection that there "are many mansions," and I hope I shall not share his.

If Christ is an "unseen Guest at every meal," the butter need not be rancid, and when there are two oyster-shells with tiny contents of minced meat for six persons, it is difficult not to smile when one's eyes, raised in despair, light on the text, "If ever I loved Thee, my Jesus, it is now." Profanity I abhor; poverty I honour. One does not meet with that kind of thing in a labourer's cottage. Fare may be cheap but it can be good; and may not cant and niggardliness be reverently branded "abominations to the Lord"?

In one house where for grant purposes I was almost roasted alive with huge fires, to which the perspiring host and servants were evidently quite unaccustomed, fresh from a huge text, "Looking unto Jesus," I plunged into the rector's conversation. "I got quite near to the King," he told me, "almost touched him, nearest I've ever been," and the whole house may be said to smell of the upper ten thousand as some houses do of upholstery. "Rest in the Lord" hung over a most uncomfortable bed, and I could not help thinking, "I certainly cannot rest here." "Warm our cold hearts," in a morning room was incongruous enough with breakfast unpunctual, chilly, and uninviting.

But far be it from me "to fault," if I may use a Suffolk expression, anything that may ever do anybody any good. I myself was helped by some lines I saw on a vicarage staircase—

> "Downward, ever downward falls the slope of sin,
> Stopping isn't easy, therefore don't begin."

It reminded me of Spurgeon's famous object-lesson when he slid down the banister of his platform to show the ease of the

downward path, and climbed laboriously up the stairs to show the arduous upward way.

In a rectory near Beccles, where the rector was a kinsman of Nelson, I heard the lines—

> "A fallow mind, like fallow field,
> May after crop of increase yield,
> And a wise indolence may be
> The mother of new industry."

In another I read under a quaint picture of a Bible and a plough, "Culture harmeth neither folk nor field." And three scrolls in that model church at Ringsfield I quote from memory :—

> "Who that is Living under the Sun,
> Can shun the bighting of the tongue?
> The better done the more envyed,
> Yet of the best, the best are justifyed"—
>
> "Abstine—contine—sustine"—

And—

> "Disce mori."

For these seven are true phylacteries.

Can I ever forget the happy days I spent with one of the great Arnold family, late rector of Ringsfield? No man was ever more lovable, and no man could hit harder, whether it was when knocking his equally powerful son into the rectory pond with a boxing glove, or when pommelling a third giant, his neighbouring rector, over school matters. They shared a school, but the entry of one was the signal for the exit of the other—like the two figures in the ingenious contrivance to forecast the weather. I often made a congregation for him in his impressive daily services. Nor did I need to fear the responses, as I did when at another church the parson in a heavenly voice chanted the first verse of the psalm, and there was no one but myself to answer. It sounds nothing now, but that pause was most painful at the time, and though my relief was not so great as Isaac's when he saw the ram entangled, yet it was great when an equally heavenly voice from behind me took up the chant. A curate had stolen in unperceived.

There is also the kind but not cultured wife of another kind and cultured rector. "Not tired of your monotonous life yet?" was her first remark to me. "You don't eat

new bread, it doesn't sit well on your stomach; I know it didn't with me after my sixth son was born. I am afraid there is only cold ham; if I had only known you were coming I would have had roast duck and peas, I know gentlemen like them," etc. Heroes and saints would do well sometimes not to take their worshippers to the family table. Perhaps that partly accounts for celibacy in the Church of Rome. What hair-shirts, etc., etc., can touch the sufferings of a married man with such a wife? Just as he is giving me a delightful description she breaks in from her perspiration behind the steaming boiled beef, "Now don't talk but 'and 'im the greens."

One of the great Welldon's kinsmen, an octogenarian, but active as a cat, startled me at his first dinner by quite a barricade of cut decanters with all shades of excellent wine. Peeping round the right side (I was his *vis-à-vis*), he asked which wine would I take, and I politely declined. Instead of that not uncommon look of a man who explains your refusal by assuming that his wine is not good enough, he peeps round the left side this time and to my great relief—who love not to be a wet blanket—he says, "Neither do I take wine." He afterwards made use of an expression which I treasure. "I am an ascetic," he said (round the right end of the barricade) "on Epicurean principles" (round the left). But the best thing I remember about temperance was when, "hung up" in my car on a pouring wet day, with only one desolate, long, white-walled, green-ponded farm-house near, I craved shelter and food there. The hostess and I each trying to preach temperance to the other, were both caught in our own nets, for while she busied herself preparing some black dish of pork, I said (proudly holding up a transparent bottle filled with water), "You need not trouble about the drink, I carry my own."

She peered in three times through the smoke from a grate that had not been used for six months before she summoned courage to say, "You will pardon me asking, but may I hot you some water to mix with it?"

She mistook the contents of my bottle for gin and probably expected to have me on her hands for the rest of the day.

The late Canon Hooke of Clopton told me how, at a meeting, when he had informed his audience that he did once, when

exhausted, drink a glass of brandy—only to feel more exhausted—a hoarse voice shouted, "Yew should have taken TEW"—(two). And the hoarse voice re-appears in the experience of the Temperance Countess whose chief attraction was certainly not to be found in her personal appearance.

"My friends, of all my happy evenings on this platform, to-night is the happiest. My husband, never an extremist either way, last night—oh! the joy of it—signed the pledge—I tear away the curtain of privacy—Do you know what I did? I rushed into his arms and kissed him!"

"Sarved him well right"—growled the hoarse voice.

My assistants in the old days used to exercise the minds of managers a little, as to whether it was etiquette to ask them with me. I have always of late years found my Sub-inspectors charming companions, but I did once have a Lancashire assistant who made strange remarks, *e.g.* :—

Host.—"Have some claret, Mr W.?"

"No thanks, not because I don't like the wine, but because I rarely——"

Host.—"You are right I don't like it either." Again, "Do you keep a cow, Mr W.?"

"Well—there is no accommodation in my garden for a cow."[1]

Again, "Have some strawberries."

"No, thanks, when you can pick 'em and eat 'em I like 'em."

"You have strawberries, then?"

"Yes, *good* ones," with a glance at those on the table.

"The wind has changed, I think."

"Yes," in a most *recherché* voice. "It has gone warmer."

"And how is Mrs W.?"

"She still secretes bile," etc.

"Wine, Mr W.?"

"No, thanks."

"Abstainer?"

"Oh, no, but I won't take any of *this* wine."

But after all, I verily believe Mr W.'s half sulky silence which seems to say, "Oh, go on, I know it's all lies," impresses folk much more than my efforts to make things

[1] He lived in a small house in a back street of a town.

run smoothly. Of course Mr W. is quite unconscious of any pain inflicted by his manner.

Lunching at a well-known show place, an ideal English country home, in a pause, he grunts out to the squire, "I suppose this is a kind of Hendon where they drive down, 'ave a drink, and drive back."

An example of British worship of royalty, as well as an experience on my part of the host's side of an entertainment to which "suthin' hangs" (as they say in Suffolk) may be seen together in the following reminiscences—and more hung to the visit of an H.M.I., in Schedule days, than often hangs to that of royalty. The peaceful breakfast in a nobleman's seat, on one of the loveliest of Ireland's lovely bays, was disturbed by a wire announcing a visit from the late Duke of Teck, father of the present Queen, in two hours' time. The earl being confined to his bed, the execution of the Countess's commands devolved on me, the only guest. And the first step was up the butler's narrow staircase to see that ex-guardsman was perfectly shaved. A bewilderment of visits to police for an escort, etc., etc., shopping, uncovering plate, etc. were facilitated by the extraordinary fervour which everyone showed as soon as they learnt the cause.

Up, at last, drove the solemn cortege—just as at the very last moment I had unearthed from the fat Peerage the correct title, serene, not royal highness; for it was about 1900. As we glided into lunch the duke's son, a handsome well set-up and charming youth of the Norfolk squire type, blew a kiss at "Grandpapa," George III., which brought us to the senses of which the genial and natural warmth of father and son had almost bereft us. The solemn silence was then broken by the loud explosion of a cork from a champagne bottle on the sideboard. Even inanimate things had caught the infection. Who would have dreamed that that plucky bottle was the only one; and that it had been opened once already last night for dinner, and was only recorked? For in the wild rush there was no time to remedy the awful discovery that there was no more champagne. I suppose, in the millenium, servants will give one good notice when to order fresh supplies.

Could it be royalty that whispered as the duke did to me,

to remove the egg-plums lest he should finish the dish, and then a story about the marriage of the late Baroness Burdett-Coutts which like Swinburne the poet's genius "nascitur-sed non fit" for publication. As we left lunch that fascinating youth held up his hands with a "fie, fie" to screen his eyes from some paintings rather lavish in their display of nudity. The duke then fully appreciated the tapestry, miniatures, etc. displaying no ordinary knowledge and intelligence in the matter. Indeed he was one who would have won all hearts in any rank of life; and after gratefully kissing his hostess' hand, before I knew it, he heartily clapped me on the back with a very complimentary remark. In the privacy of these pages I may say I thought that, had it been in the good old days, I might have been knighted, which reminds me of the Suffolk village cricketer who when asked what score he made, replied, "I should have got forty, but I was 'bowelled' the first ball." Alas! there was a fly in my ointment, I forgot the cigars. How much malice these royal hearts bore may be shown by their lynx-eyed detection of me next week on the Cork platform, cleverly as I had concealed myself among the crowd. "You MUST travel with us," but alas I was travelling on second from Cork, which once more reminded me of what their entire absence of any such idea had obliterated, namely our different ranks. Those who abuse royalty should know them.

But London hotels are not entirely devoid of drawbacks in point of noise, food, vulgarity of brute wealth, etc. And worst of all is the greed that boarding-houses bring to light. The bottles with dirty napkins round their necks as if they had sore throats, the lightning-like disappearance of the contents of hot dishes, the rush to the gaunt, haggard, cold joints as to cities of refuge, everybody trying to impress everybody else by superior manners, but greediness everywhere the only genuine article. At one room in a seaside boarding-house on a very hot day, when forty people were packed into a dining-room built for twenty, it was my fate to sit at the table crammed into an empty fireplace, in such a way that the mantelshelf forced our noses forward over a most powerful gorgonzola cheese. There was no room to move it away, and while a female ogre at the next table loudly descanted on how much better she had things at

home, we waited, and waited well, which could not be said of the waiters. At last, like a lifeboat battling with billows of human greed, a female, bearing a plate with two halves of a tomato and four small lettuce leaves, forced her way through a sea of hands in a desperate effort to reach us, whose patience had touched even her heart, for as she said we were the only ones that didn't ask. This sort of thing reconciles one even to the rectory where you are greeted with, "Oh, you've come. I'm so sorry, but the bees have swarmed in your bedroom and we cannot disturb them"; or where I am told about Johnnie's pimples, and how his papa had them in just the same place, and "we all had to go to Ipswich for the day," as if Ipswich was the centre of the planetary system; or where I (Mr Swinburne) am accosted with, "So glad to meet you again, Mr Fussell, I remember you so well—one never forgets a name like yours."

At a state dinnner given by a friend at Cambridge, when eighteen guests were seated in a room about twenty-seven by eighteen feet, with four maids to wait, the lift hitched at the last moment. The host, mistaking the delirious cries of the four maids for an announcement of dinner, set the solemn procession in motion. The sight which greeted the distinguished company as they entered was one of wild confusion, and matters were not improved by the pet pug which, seizing the carpenter's calf (his head was in the kitchen flirting with the four maids), produced, in addition to his own barking, a roar of "Take that infernal dog off," which came from below. It was a case of "To your tents, O Israel," and a general scrimmage followed; but it all came out right, and the only other hitch occurred when I offered a grape-skin at dessert to the fat pug, and was reprimanded by the hostess, "We never give him the skins."

I have lunched one day with a farmer, the next day with a sequestrated Irish parson without a stick of furniture save the table (the big house supplying the viands), when the pupil teacher in buttons tumbled with excitement into a rich flood of cauliflower sauce which he had upset on the bare dirty boards, and the third day in a carpenter's shop with a shooting party; but the lunch that touched me most of all my many lunches came about as follows:—

At a certain sleepy hollow school inspection a noble lord,

a magnificent agent, two plump farmers, and an equally plump clergyman present, there was not so much as a suggestion of hospitality and no inn near, and it was one o'clock. There was not even a man to help me harness the mare in the farmer's stables, whither a boy had conducted her. But behold, among my rugs in the cart,[1] one creature kind and pitiful—to wit—a hen, who clucked furiously as I disturbed her in the act of laying me an egg in the cart. Inspectors who go straight have, I suppose, some claim to be regarded as sons of the Prophets, and so like Elijah to be fed by the birds.

[1] A farmer of the old school, when dog-carts were carts and farming was farming, similarly found a turkey's nest in the straw that then served as a mat. Care was taken not to disturb her, and when sitting time came she accompanied her master to Ipswich, some five miles distant, each market day, and, taking the excitement of town inn stables quite philosophically, hatched out all her eggs in due course.

CHAPTER XI

GENERAL

Had I then known on that steamer what I do after thirty-five years, I might have felt that, enveloped in that white sheet, and in the darkness of the night, I too was undergoing initiation as knight errant—for the Fads in high places bear a strong resemblance to the monsters of old—and in protecting children, teachers, and managers from the ravages of these—*e.g.* the percentage craze, whether in passes or attendance, or the physical exercise mania, or twenty others. H.M.I.s have stronger claims to be regarded as public benefactors than they are generally supposed to have. As a matter of fact they inspire an irrepressible suspicion or dread—as I did to that Dutch sailor; and the kinder they are, the more snake-like they appear. An Englishman, especially, dislikes anything inquisitorial, and their being connected with Government does not help matters; and most of the people in town and country being more or less local, rather shrink from the purged vision of a wider flight.

For the present, gardening is the craze. Although swimming and cookery, arts which are not known to the parents, pass beyond all challenge, the need of putting gardening on the rates is seriously open to question. While the theory embraces notes on humidity of the atmosphere, lists of Latin names for weeds, etc., recommendations of "potassic manures," glossaries—such as "impervious, a term applied to clayey soils because it is difficult for water to percolate," etc., the practice mainly consists in planting a few rows of vegetables. Is it not a subtle introduction of the thin edge of a wedge known as the farmer's opposition to education—an opposition most natural; for has he not been robbed of those tempting morsels of cheap labour—the children?

Exceptional schools, where the master is a gardener born,

may profit, but as a rule the attempt is ludicrously beyond the age and capacity of the children. *Nous verrons.* The Metfield School gardens were before the House of Commons twenty years ago. It is a resuscitated fad.

To-day (1911) I saw children left to silent reading of a manual on gardening. H.M. inspectors, for obvious reasons, were not allowed to write books for use in schools. The temptation was too great. "Give them larnin'," said a parent to me, "and they'll pick up the rest." Should we teach artists' children how to paint pictures at school?—a taste for reading will lead to the perusal of text-books in due course. Is it not as with the opposition to the emancipation of slaves, which died hard?

Even if all Europe is temporarily blind, I still hold it unjust for any man to fix the future occupation of the county lads; but rural children might leave school at eleven,[1] provided evening instruction were organised from October to March—and this would satisfy all parties, for scores of farmers have told me they do not want the children before that age. Are the farmers who themselves cannot afford to adequately fence, manure, equip, plant, etc., their farms to be rated to provide these luxuries for the labourer's child? In game counties? Since hoes came in at the door, libraries have flown out of the window. And think of the tool sheds! Every one agrees to reading being taught; but reading without school libraries is a truly British idea. You might as well teach your children the use of teeth by a dry imitation instead of real food.

The book on gardening is apt to be a cross between a book to read and a manual—a failure at both, being neither good sound literature nor serviceable text-book, just as the geography manuals used to be—stones, rather than bread, to the hungry children—and having the same effect on them as a Bradshaw, sent to us by our library, for a book of travel, would on us. By the way (at Bungay, not many years ago) a Bradshaw was, even at the best shop, handed to a traveller who asked for literature to while away some hours' delay, and when I first came, there was no book shop—strictly speaking—in Lowestoft. How imperfectly the names of Bungay (the beautiful island), Beccles (Beata Ecclesia)

[1] This was written before Mr Runciman's proposals (1911) were issued.

represent the beauty of their generally accepted derivations. An early June morning seen through the open bedroom window of Father Flemming's home—an island of peace in an island of beauty—is a joy for ever. "Go to Bungay" is a saying in the United States—but alas! it is only for a certain kind of breeches. To resume.

Toy or play gardens for those who care to have one are of course admirable.

Some letters on school expeditions—a far more educational idea—will be found in Appendix II.

I do not for a moment distrust the teachers; but it is a great temptation in out-of-the-way villages. One teacher told me he regarded it as a valuable lesson in self-denial for the children, if he appropriated the garden produce. Another said (when I read in the note-books, 'Planted the master's peas,' etc.): "It makes children grasping to pay them."

Apropos of the three R's. A parent, who very strongly objected to his son being taught geography, burst into a school while Mr Danby was conducting the inspection, and so violently withdrew his son from the class which was being examined in that subject, that the master followed his antagonist in an argument to the porch, where Mr Danby found both—divesting themselves of their coats in order to settle the matter in truly British fashion. Mr Danby, with that smile on his large prominent rodents, which was all his own, descended upon them as a Heaven-sent arbitrator.

"My friends, why quarrel over a shadow? If they do learn geography they know nothing whatever about it—I'll stake my reputation as an experienced examiner on that." The hands of both fell and peace was restored.

Of course it is a very different matter when we come to grammar as taught until recently. To thrust such barbarous and arbitrary distinctions, couched in a foreign tongue, and devised by mediæval schoolmen, down the throats of children whose vocabulary in their own language and homes is of the smallest, is a mild species of atrocity, best described in the little girl's answer to my question—

"What is a verb?"

"Please, sir—to suffer."

"But what do you mean by suffer?"

"Please, sir, to be cruel to her."

To confine oneself to the three R's is like feeding—without food; but in grammar—they left before, so to speak, the tune was reached—it was all scales. English is another thing. Every squire and farmer would approve of sermons in church; but what use are sermons to hearers of whose speech the following is a fair specimen?—

"I don't improve of that boy's ways; if he was mine I'd send him to a Terriform."

A stone mason, preaching from a Nonconformist pulpit, in the hearing of a friend of mine, began: "I shall divide my sermon to-day into three catter-stroughs — catter-strough (1), catter-strough (2), catter-strough (3)." "And," muttered my friend, "it will be catter-strough (4) to have to sit and listen to you."

Over-education! It is under-education we have to fear. The Scotch have had this education two hundred years—and the kipper lasses, the northern smacksmen, the gardeners (not to mention Scotch songs, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, Mr Balfour, Lord Rosebery, etc.) are with us to show what the Scotch people can do.

The bust of "Bobby Burns" is on the Scotch peasant's piano. Whoever heard a Suffolk labourer quote Shakespeare?

My father, passing Bannockburn on the box of the coach, was nearly thrust off his seat by a dig in the ribs from the elbow of a Scotch peasant, who occupied the next seat, of whom he had asked—

"Let me see—what took place at Bannockburn?"

"Dinna ye ken whar ye were leeked?" roared his neighbour.

A stalwart agriculturalist I know in Suffolk, who is small in nothing but the size of his farm, forms, so to speak, an oasis of happy work and content in a desert of grumbling. After an exhausting effort to amuse a village evening school with humorous sketches from a gramophone, I felt rather like the American showman whose fireworks would not go off until he put them all together, and then "they DID went off" —and four of his fingers with them.

I heaped on the funniest, one after another—in vain. At length the schoolmaster stole up to me and whispered—

"It's most kind of you, sir, but you'll pardon me if I take a liberty. I think they'd like a comic one now."

Except to their own local talent, Suffolk audiences are sometimes terribly heavy.

Not to mention the immortal misapprehension of the farmer, who, hearing the parson say that the commentators disagreed with him, sent him a sack of very rare potatoes. But there is hope.

Of course much of the unpopularity of extra subjects is due to a faulty notion of what a child should be taught. In history and geography the scholars were crammed with so many facts which—"'twere folly to remember, 'twere wisdom to forget."[1] Furthermore, the poor, though ever imitating the apparel of the bodies of those better off than themselves, are slow to imitate the apparel of the mind—even though it costs them nothing!

A good deal of this state of things is due to the exodus of the clergy from the schools, an exodus which began with the small rural Board schools. After an inspection of one of these small Board schools an inefficient Irish schoolmaster filled columns of the local paper with harrowing descriptions of the little green graves in his village churchyard. The late Mr Mundella wrote to me as follows:—

"*9th January* 1883.

"Dear Sir,—Will you kindly inform me whether there is any truth in the statement of Mr ——, that he would be dismissed and his certificate cancelled if he taught morals in his school? Perhaps you can throw some light on his bitter attack upon the Department.—Yours faithfully,

"A. J. Mundella.

"A. J. Swinburne, Esq."

I did throw light—and threw my schoolmaster assailant at the same time.

And the late Col. Barnes of Ipswich pursued me from the ground-floor upwards in Poyle House, Norwich Road, with a similar column—which I declined to read—until we reached the attic, where, like a hunted creature, I had to yield.

[1] "Learn to use and not to be
A book on English History"—

is useful doggerel, and Dictionary, Geography or Poetry may be read for "History."

But oh! how different were those dignified days to the times that be!

Then we rightly ignored tittle-tattle; now I believe it is part of the duty of subordinate officials to watch for and cull such vilely offensive matter.

Then we acted on the principle that if we went straight and guarded our course with discretion, we need fear no enemies; and so we went strong. Nowadays that spirit of weakness, which is characteristic of ill-founded autocracy at the head, undermines the influence of the rank and file. No real progress can thus be made. People soon find out when reckless abuse and calumny cover inefficiency. It was foreshadowed in Mr Mundella's letter.

An earnest and disappointed rector in one village told me the schools were teaching immorality, but his churchwarden added, "It is not the day school but the Sunday-school that does it."—Non nostrum inter tantos.

But my experience of mixed schools tends to prove that imagination paints a worse picture than the facts warrant. The girls get used to the boys, and they go their own ways.

Near London, at a high-class almost grown-up girls' school, so eminently respectable that they drove to church on Sundays in private omnibuses, I was told by a relative, who was educated there, that they used to tuck notes furtively into the lining of the music master's hat, left in the hall, because they knew that article of apparel was similarly left in the hall of the neighbouring equally eminently respectable school for boys.

But on the other hand (see Archdeacon Lawrence's able visitation charge at Saxmundham in May 1911) the clergy have partly themselves to blame, for too many of them neglected the opportunity when they had it.

In one school I found the mistress in tears because her infants had answered the rector's Bible questions so indifferently. "I told him," she sobbed out to me, "that they are always nervous of strangers"; and he had been in the parish for years!

Nor do I think I should have suffered the shock I did once at Lowestoft had the parson been a more frequent visitor—at least at religious instruction.

Arriving in the last moments of the religious hour, I was so struck by the beautiful sight before me—a tall, auburn-haired school-mistress of faultless face and figure, and some three hundred infants all on their knees in rapt devotion, that I halted, the door handle still in my hand, to contemplate more closely the scene lit up by that morning sun, in the brightness of which Lowestoft, an East Anglian Venice, knows few rivals.

"What manner of man ought H.M.I. himself to be," I thought, "if such was the exemplary earnestness of those it was his privilege to inspect?" For the little ones' mouths had perforce to be opened to allow of sufficient flesh for the intensity of the closing of their eyes.

They were just at:

"Forgive—us—our—trespasses—" (in the mistress's possibly somewhat harsh voice—) "Forgive—us—our—trespasses—" shrilly piped the rosy-faced youngsters.

Mistress—"As we forgive them that—"

Children—"As we forgive them that—"

And suddenly—to dispel my dream of the beauty of holiness and in a voice so unmistakably harsh this time, as to positively hurt one—the mistress yelled—"Nicodemus Obadiah Bugg, you've got one eye half open, I'll whack you after school."

It wasn't so much the words; it was the tone!

On the other hand it needs some one more capable than I am to chronicle the heroism of clergymen like the Rev. C. Downton, who stood alone and fought for his Church, nay, for Christianity, in a manner which recalled the Royal martyr whose monument is not only the stone cross, but the custom still prevalent in the parish of Hoxne, viz., that no married couple may pass over the bridge where the reflection of the king's spur in the stream betrayed the king's hiding-place.

In the first place, this parson, supported by Lady Bateman, bravely fought the good fight of the accommodation. Other names could be cited as having done likewise. Nor ought those of Mary Lady Tollemache, the late Lady Caroline Kerrison, and the Lady Constance Barne to be omitted—all true friends of their schools.

The farmers who had rebelled against a 1s. rate, after my

explanation to them that a 4d. rate would suffice, instead of heaping thanks upon me as I expected, coolly rejoined, "But we don't want any rate *at all*"; upon which occasion I, pointing to the monument, said—

"Your king, years ago, endured to be shot to death with arrows for his faith, and you will not even bear the pinprick of a 4d. rate for the same." They thanked me. "They had not thought of it so."

And, again, when that vicar, by the dismissal of a master, brought down upon his unfortunate head the Black List condemnation of a leading educational organ, so that for six months he had to "hold the bridge," single handed, until at last an excellent schoolmaster who could think and act for himself, took pity on him, and from that time, many years ago, till now, the school has from being a third-rate institution attained the highest rank of efficiency.

I wonder whether a low standard of religion has anything to do with the exceptional growth of that deadly poisoned weed, if I may so call it, in Suffolk village life—scandal.

It has been my privilege personally to uproot—bit by bit—several of these horrible tissues of lies, and I select one—the selection being facilitated by the fact that most of them are unfit for publication. Two of them fastened on clergymen—both of them the very last people in the world likely to give just cause for such vile calumny.

Early one morning at a visit to a school, whose master had long enjoyed the confidence of managers and parents, I found dismay on all sides. Had I seen the managers? My two sub-inspectors being with me, we could expeditiously look around to see if all was as we left it after our last excellent report. Satisfied with our observations, I invited the managers to meet us at twelve.

We met, and at my request faced certain aggrieved parents whose complaints may be gathered from the following summary—substantially accurate, as far as my memory serves.

No. 1.—"They don't teach Hooclid and Halgebra."

H.M.I.—"It would be difficult to award higher praise to an elementary school." Collapse of this recent importation from a northern town.

No. 2.—"My boy aint larnin' anything about Canada."

H.M.I.—"Another feather in the master's cap—the year's course being Europe. Next man in, please."

No. 3.—"They don't fare to larn my son nothin' near enough Grammar-like."

H.M.I.—"It has been my proud privilege to report year after year against this cruel mediæval ogre that feeds on children's brains, though I respect people who can stand alone—and I respect you for standing alone among parents—in having a good word for it. But the code has put it beyond controversy now."

"May I ask you," I continued, "if you realise what you malcontents are doing? The rumour, set rolling by your complaints, may deprive an honest and efficient hard-worker (the schoolmaster), a family man, of his bread and butter.

"What would you say, sir (addressing No. 3), if your employers (I believe you are engaged in the engineering department) were to discharge you to-morrow—forsooth, for the sole reason that you could not cut out a lady's blouse?"

A burst of laughter greeted this unfortunate remark—my first stumble—for it happened that this particular man *could* cut out ladies' garments.

No. 4.—"There aint no discipline, as I call it, and such like."

H.M.I.—"No discipline! I wish you could see other schools. Perhaps you mean the children have not long faces and are not trussed like fowls for cooking. It is one of the few schools where I invariably find the teachers (head and assistants) out in the playground with the children. No school drill at the county exhibition ever elicited such warm praise for the earnestness of the squad—and the distinguished army colonel from Colchester told me he wished his men had half the heart in it that they had; and did it half as well. . . ."

The master was saved, and the managers, aways sensible and well disposed, were satisfied.

Since writing this I hear the school highly distinguished itself at the Norwich Agricultural Show, 1911.

I have heard of doctors who, in treating infectious cases, have fatally contracted the malady themselves—may it not be so with me in trying to treat a case of calumny! but on dit—or on *did* dit something about an application on the

part of one of the malcontents to teach the school drill—which was refused. Hinc illæ. But of course this is only hearsay, for the truth of which I in no way vouch.

One word more about the three R's. Ought not more to be done to improve the taste as well as the faculty of reading? The Bishop of London well condemns "literary garbage," and spending a Whit Monday among the old girls and boys of elementary schools I was astonished to see the number of trashy stories (not particularly clean of cover) produced from pockets—when air and sea and land and sky in loveliest of Junes (1911) combined to supply a spectacle sufficiently absorbing.

To me it resembled persons who, at a charming play, produce dry books to study. Surrounded by a world of real natural beauty these readers seem, like ostriches, to thrust their heads into some sensational novelist's fanciful mind—an anything but desirable place to be in. Indeed some novelists would hardly listen to their own characters if they were in their company; for they have to suit their stories to the public palate, or they would never stoop so low.

Perhaps the most amusing were the many couples I beheld, who, having the rare opportunity of making love *ad libitum* themselves—turned their backs on one another, and were far, far away engrossed in other peoples' loves. Well selected school libraries are the only practical solution.

CHAPTER XII

SUFFOLK

THE four years I spent in Lancashire were not eventful ones. I was a young man then and rather an amusing incident occurred when I arrived to take "Inspection" at a certain school one day.

A Lancashire magnate, who had only recently settled in the village, full of his responsibilities as county squire, rushed into the school, and seeing me among the scholars and the Inspector, as he supposed, at the teacher's desk, whispered to me, whom he took to be the master, "Sorry I haven't been in to see you before—very busy—can't stop—you take him on till one—then I'll do my part—it shall be no fault of the lunch if we get a bad report."

Another day, not knowing the family to be absent, I called at a friend's house, where the most cordial of receptions was always mine. A new butler opened the door.

"What name?"

"Mr Swinburne!"

"Well, you see, Mr Swindler, you might be an impostor for all we know," he said, closing the door in my face.

The said butler, who had a predilection for taking the air in his master's carriage accompanied by the cook and *en grand tenue* (the coachman and the footman on the box), received, together with these other choice spirits, notice to quit some months later.

The only time I caught an R.C. priest tripping was in the case of a schoolmistress' false registration. I had to carry a revolver while conducting a house-to-house inquiry, the Irish parents resenting an attack on the priest as on the Almighty.

The story of "not hold enough" (p. 85) found a Suffolk counterpart when a member of a small Suffolk Board,

soliciting my help in the choice of a mistress, added—"But she must be over forty, sir, as the chairman is—well—yer see, sir—he's a bit amorous like."

Amongst my most pleasant recollections of Wigan are my visits to the rectory, the home of the late Canon, the Hon. Orlando Bridgeman, which were as an oasis in a grimy wilderness.

There was an incident the Canon used to describe so vividly that one wondered if it had occurred in the annals of his own family history.

Two men, a Cavalier and a Roundhead, had a serious dispute. They agreed to extinguish the candles and fight a duel with pistols in the dark. The Cavalier, not wishing to kill his opponent, thought the chimney the safest place into which to discharge the contents of his weapon. The pistol shot and a cry of agony were almost simultaneous; the Puritan, having decided to save not only his adversary's, but his own life as well, had sought a fastness in the recesses of the chimney.

In manufacturing centres, with machinery whirring night and day, it is not strange that accidents might almost be termed the rule, rather than the exception, and although one becomes more or less inured to harrowing stories of human suffering, a tragic accident that happened during my sojourn at Wigan impressed me so painfully that it is as fresh in my mind to-day, at a distance of thirty years, as if it occurred but yesterday.

A little girl had taken her brother's dinner to a large cloth mill. The boy was still at work, and the child, anxious to see him, leaned over the shaft of a large wheel, one of the terrible joints of which caught her pinafore and absorbed her small body into the circle of the revolving monster's ceaseless and relentless activity.

An anguished cry of "Jamie, Jamie"—the brother rushes to help her but all that he retrieves is an insensible bundle which he places in his father's arms. They both hasten home, but when the mother relieves her husband of the burden they discover that the head is gone.

That well-known story of two miners conveys a truer idea of the Lancashire character than pages of psychological analysis could.

A collier visits a mate who is dying and strives in his primitive fashion to cheer him with the prospect that he has of becoming an angel.

"Shall I have wings?" came faintly from the bed.

"Yea!"

"Wilt thee too if thee coom there?"

"Yea!"

"Eh, mon"—with a momentary renewal of life—"I'll fly thee for a sovereign. Is it a match?"

My wife's health having caused me to petition to be removed to Suffolk, my wish was kindly granted, and I have never regretted that migration. Northerners are warm-hearted and hospitable, but the spirit they vaunt so loudly as independence manifests itself not unfrequently in a rawness of manner that amounts to insolence. The wheels of life are better oiled in the pleasanter surroundings of Suffolk where the native is of a naturally courteous turn of mind.

The moorland strip stretching between Felixstowe and Sandringham, some ten miles inland, is canopied by a bluer sky and carpeted by a dryer soil during a longer period of the year than any other part of England. Although this soil is geologically akin to that of Bournemouth, the air makes that of the favourite health resort seem faint and languid in comparison. Visitors who have seen Suffolk from the window of a railway carriage can have but an inadequate idea of the charm of that moorland strip, parts of which the Ordnance Map so well dubs "Little Scotland," "New delight, etc., and at both ends of which royalty has chosen a residence—Edward III. at Felixstowe, Edward VII. at Sandringham. Full many a Tintern-like structure, full many a glorious old church furnish additional proof of the appreciation of bygone generations.

And who can read untouched that history written in stone?

Silent those crumbling Abbeys stand—emblems of Love—where Lucre (some perhaps from within, but certainly far more from without) "broke through and stole." All Peace and Beauty still—though in their decay—even to the eyes that cannot see—while the eyes that can see are saddened by the hideousness of some neighbouring "Non-con-chapel" whose doctrine and ugliness (like two sour-visaged but well-

meaning old maid sisters) "keep the village pond from being idle." The italicised words are not mine; but those of a well-known, respected, and experienced country doctor, who declared the village pond to be a water Moloch for weak flesh still weaker through a doctrine of despair. An exaggeration, of course; but there is something in it. A pitying glance above the few trees that cluster close about them like faithful retainers—those ruins seem to cast at the impoverished vicarage, the semi-lighthouse life of which cries aloud for some system of brotherhoods, to save the savour of the salt—a savour too often liable to fall "sick unto death;" or at a church with roof (so to speak) banged down over its eyes, to save in height (as village school boards have been known to brick up sunny windows to save blinds), or at the degenerate descendant of one of their own old churches—now thatched *à la* barn—or at interiors, damp, cold, and bare, where richest hangings, ornaments, and pictures used to bring home to the hearts of the country side that Religion is not Death but Life.

"They knew not what they did" is the spirit breathed by those noble relics of the past, as they gauntly face, over the tree tops, the turrets and gables of neighbouring mansions which recall the minster's own old glory—and its plundering!

The luxury and pomp are still with us; but cannot cases be found where these modern social shrines are less mindful of the peasant than of the pheasant? The commentator, Mr Denton, told me that rural life of England has never before or since been what it was in the fourteenth century. Barn-owls flapping silent wings over chancels converted to barns! They "parted His garments," "casting lots" and priceless vestments, besides priceless libraries were lost under the dice-box. I calculate that a sum sufficient to pay the whole poor-rate of to-day found its way to pockets that were anything but poor. The rebellions of the cottage world that followed on the discovery of the true state of affairs came too late.

Still soar those windowless gables to giddy heights—an ensign far seen and hollow-eyed. Poor ruin! but after all what is good enough for the Master is good enough for the man. Was not He too crowded out to a stable? He, too,

lacked even a fox's shelter; and if the chief corner-stone was despised and sold, well may your walls be haggled over to mend roads—by rural boards, whose lack of enthusiasm is sometimes such that it occurs to one how much better it would be for the roads (and for the world in general) if, by some humane device, the skinflint material their hearts are made of could be utilized for that purpose instead. Sinking imperceptibly, year by year, but sinking ever!—while the gilly-flowers that cling with canine fidelity, in spite of beggarly sustenance, lovingly spread out their little leaves, all the long winter through, as if, at least, to keep some of the weather out. Lower and lower, yet lasting marvellously well, alone in the silence of the heart of the country-side, those ruins somehow recall the lines of Byron that made another ruin in stone (the dying gladiator) live again—and live for ever—

"And his droop'd head sinks gradually low."

Did not the Roman monks and friars "fight the good fight," for one thousand years, as valiantly as any Roman gladiator? Take heart again, the same hard worldliness made your Master bow His head, and die. All forsook Him and fled; as all but the wall-flowers have forsaken you. But the end is yet to come—and my ancestor, John Swinburne, one of the principal leaders in the Northern Rebellion of 1569, and his faithful kinsmen, and many another, may after all be right when, laymen as they were, they sacrificed all for their faith; and their descendants, thus impoverished, may yet be rich in the wealth that neither corrupts nor is corrupted. From the blood of seeming failure spring Victory's strongest shoots.[1]

[1] An age of private war and private castles—compared with which the worst trials under our squirearchy are matter for congratulation—and when men said, "Christ and His Apostles are gone to sleep"—gave birth to monasteries—a heaven-sent blessing to the land. The mediæval nobles and landed gentry who, though their queen (bloody (?) Mary) offered to give them a nobler lead than "Good Queen Bess" could ever bring herself even to dream of, hugged stolen pelf.—Protestant light? Where are the rural libraries now that then dotted England from end to end? I write feelingly—having founded a county library, and paying as owner great tithes on land which belonged to the Priory at Snape—all, of course, in a small way. The Swinburnes were always "muni-

But to resume. There is no lack of shrewdness in the Suffolk peasant, and silly Suffolk is an equally misleading expression, whether it means stupid or holy (selig).

A story is told of a relative of Lord Henniker in the Boer War, who, when in command of the 2nd Life Guards, while galloping past with important despatches, was surprised to see a troop of "Suffolks" encamped near the road.

"What are you doing here?" he shouted to the sergeant.

"I doen now," replied the sergeant.

"What are your instructions?"

"I doen now."

"How long are you staying here?"

"I doen now."

Swallowing his wrath and forcing himself to be amicably argumentative, "Do you know who I am?" asked the colonel; "just think what this might lead to—why, you might have shot ME for a spy."

"That just what I was a goen to dew," was the quiet reply of the sergeant, who was not going to be pumped anymore than the boy who, in reply to an inquisitive passer-by, had asked, "Whose pigs are those, boy?" shouted "Maister's."

"Of course, but who is your master?"

"That old sow—dew what I can I CAN'T keep her in this here field."

Or another who, in reply to a passing stranger in a dogcart who had asked—

"Whose sheep are those?" answered—

"I doan't now that I'm fooced to tell yew."

ficent patrons" of the monasteries. My cousin, Charles Alfred Swinburne, little thought he was keeping up the old, old family ways when recently he bequeathed some £50,000 to the Margate Sea-bathing Hospital. Hospital is but Hospitium again—a relic of those centres of Light and Love—though, alas! philanthropy is but a part, twice blessed, of Religion. The nobleman who decked his porter's lodges with the stately remains of the neighbouring abbey might at least have spared one insult more—by according them a more distinguished place. Bishop Welldon says Parliament is "omnipotent to disendow." Bishops made similar monstrous assertions about certain kings of old. But surely their omnipotence would be more justly utilized in restoring stolen Church property than in stealing more, and that, property, to which the owners have exceptionally sacred rights.

Their knowledge, however, of any things beyond their village is startlingly small.

At the time when the struggle between Russia and Japan had reached its climax and become the absorbing topic of the whole world, a Suffolk labourer, off work, accosted a friend engaged in digging: "Bad news from the war, Bör."

"Whose a'fightin' then?"

"Why, them Rooshans and Japanese."

"Oh, they're a'fightin' are they?" (pausing from his work).

"Oh yes, they're a'fightin' like Billyo!"

"Are they, though?"

"Yes, that they are."

"Well," after placidly scanning the horizon and resuming his work, "they've got a nice day for it, anyhow."

An aged keeper under a neighbouring landowner, years ago, simply could not speak for knowingness. All he could do was to point over both shoulders with his thumbs. At last I discovered his meaning—I was to plant broom in an open place—to harbour game—and it was against his employer's interest. How kind of him, I thought, till a final revelation was vouchsafed—"Would I buy a dorg?" With the simplicity of "we are seven," and though I assured him I did not want one, he would repeat—"If yew can find a single white hair in him—at any date—I'll give yew back the money.

"Black as a coal," he muttered reproachfully as he left, taking the dorg with him.

Anxious to impress my man with the inferiority of my potatoes to those grown by the boys in their school garden, I drove him some 15 miles to convince him by ocular demonstration. The only effect produced on him by the splendid crop was the remark, "Now do you just but think, if the disease was to break out, what a sight of jobs it 'ud have here."

When filling in the agricultural returns, I asked the same man how many pigs I had. He answered "Thirty-three," then, thinking it was a tax, he added, "I shouldn't say zactly thirty-three, 'cos some of 'em might die."

Nor are the Suffolkers devoid of wit. The following repartee is a proof of it. At an evening school inspection at Butley I was shown a wooden musical instrument which the school-

master proudly informed me one of the lads had made out of his own head.

"Out of your own head!" I inquired, smiling at the lad, who was blushing with pleasure.

"Yes, and he's got enough there to make another," said an envious fellow-student.

A Suffolk girl, æt. 13, was asked by her Sunday-school teacher—

"King Pharaoh's daughter found the little baby Moses in the bulrushes, didn't she?"

"She *said* so, miss."

Another Sunday-school teacher, wishing to make her question clear, asked a girl, who came after, instead of who succeeded Solomon.

The girl replied in a voice which reproached her teacher for touching on such subjects—

"The Queen of Sheba, miss."

An examiner asking a class why the shepherd who had the ninety-nine should trouble to go after the one, received the reply from a shepherd's boy, "Please, sir, it must have been the tup."

After a lucid explanation of the same parable, the grey bearded Diocesan Inspector says, "Well, my dear children, we all know, do we not, who the Shepherd is, and you are the sheep, are you not?"

"Yaas."

"Then where do you suppose I come in?"

Shepherd's boy, after a pause, thoughtfully, "You must be the ole tup."

I myself was victimized in an interview with a small farmer whose home adjoined land which I owned some distance away.

"Your things," I called out to him across the fence of the meadows in question, "are always on my land."

"No, sir, they ain't. They tells yew lies."

"What! your geese were in here all day—only yesterday."

"It is false."

"False! How can you?—Why, look behind you—actually a goose coming on now—under our very eyes—Look."

"Ah, yes—that's a very different thing—that goose see YEW on the land—that goose is lonely."

"It's plain as daylight why she's a comin' now—she's just

a-comin' for company like. . . . If it hadn't bin for yew a beein' there, that goose would never have comed."

Insult on injury; though I daresay quite unconscious—but I kept my temper—not in the sense in which the policeman took the words when I climbed into the window.

On another occasion when I reproached him with taking a gate off its hinges to let his "white horse" into my meadow—

"Excuse me, sir," he said, "let's speak the truth, it's *a grey pony.*"

A dealer, trying to buy a pig at a price below the proper one, begged my man to take the money round to the missus and *let her look at it.*

My colleague told me that upon his complimenting a policeman for his tender treatment of a manacled criminal, he received the reply, "Half killed his wife"; which reminds me of a stalwart constable, who was giving me a detailed account of a recent burglary, where the police had surrounded the house where a desperate leader of the gang had taken refuge.

"And so you rushed in to arrest him," I asked, surveying his muscular form with approval.

"Not I, sir, I've not been in the service all these years without learning something better than that. I might have done it in my first year, and deprived the country of a valuable officer; I carefully kept outside."

Delightful as Suffolk is—its peasantry display an intelligence that comes from keen observation rather than from books—and there is room for improvement so far.[1] Strangest of all they do not always know the birds they live amongst. I have heard a green woodpecker called a woodsniper and a woodcock. Even the common chaffinch's note can rarely be identified by them. But what about Londoners—when you dig below the surface ?

[1] Eighty years ago my wife's grandfather, brother of the famous Bishop of London, on moving from Bury St Edmunds to an Oxfordshire village, pronounced the latter 100 years behind the times, and the neighbouring Buckinghamshire villages as 200 years so; and my experience in several counties (England, Scotland and Ireland) bears out the fact that the intelligence in Suffolk villages is superior to that in many other counties. To call the children stupid argues stupidity. The love of flowers, the neatness and the courtesy of the Suffolk peasantry are partly due to a time when monasteries and mansion's were numerous, and intervals of forest rare.

A Suffolk woman when shown a valuable carving of the twelve apostles evinced the liveliest interest.

"That chap," she cried, "comes from Benhall. These two from Wickham market; I know 'em well. There's two on 'em from Franningham, there's two or three I can't call to mind, but, triumphantly, that's the schoolmaster from Ash. But there now, deary me, I can't see any one on 'em from Saxmundham."

A labourer who worked for me when the Home Rule craze was at its height told me that he was distracted as to which way he should vote.

"Some saay it's there—some saay it ain't, but some one must have been there to see it; there wouldn't have been all this talk about a place that warn't there, he should sartenly vote that that island *was* there."

At the usual orgie round the death-bed, one woman remarked, "Come away, she'll soon be in Beelzebub's bosom."

Hush, Martha, warned a shocked voice from amongst the crowd of gloaters, "that ain't the gentleman's name."

A farmer who had been taught to respond properly and had emigrated to a village where the service was conducted in a bygone fashion, was astonished to have his fervent responses broken in upon by the clerk who asked him in an aggrieved voice—

"Now, farmer Jones, bay it you or bay it I?"

Collapse of farmer Jones.

Cross-questioned by an official as to the denomination to which she belonged, a Suffolk woman seemed to have no idea of what he meant.

"I don't foller yer," she said.

"Well, are you church?" he asked.

She shook her head.

"Chapel?" Another shake.

"Roman Catholic, perhaps."

To this she replied most emphatically, "No."

"Well, you must know what you are. What do they call you?"

"They dew call me a hyypo-crite."

Conceit is one of the curses of village life which affords no means of comparison. A father and mother are wild with delight at the effect of their son in territorial uniform.

Their pæans in his praise become a nuisance to the village; they positively must have a frolic and see him march from Ipswich. They wait hours, entertaining their immediate neighbours in the crowd to long and intimate details of their son's extraordinary prowess. At length his corps, marching to the sound of music, appears. "There never was a smarter lad, there, there, there he is, pointing to a youth obviously out of step. You see he's the only one in step out of the whole lot."

This reminds me of the Suffolk pupil-teacher's father who proudly told me "My son passed second in the exam. He knows as much as the first—and *a leetle more*."

The Framlingham woman, whose daughter was going to service in New Zealand, in reply to a friend who commiserated her on the distance to travel, explained that her daughter was breaking the journey by sleeping a night at the village of Dennington (2 miles from Framlingham). And the Fressingfield man who on crossing the Waveney *en route* for Cromer, whither he was migrating, waved his hand, murmuring the while, "Farewell old England, no more tay, no more corfee!"

Apropos of Fressingfield, the home of the famous Sancroft, the following extract from an old directory of the counties of England is too delicious an illustration of the parable of the beam and the mote to omit.

"Upon this he (Sancroft) retired to Freshingfield in Sussex, where he spent the remainder of his days in laying out his money in the best manner he could to enrich his relations, and died in 1693.

"Our fidelity in giving a true and impartial relation of events to the public, calls upon us in this place to take notice of a strange mistake in a late author.

"He tells us that Dr Sancroft was born at Freshingfield in Surrey, whereas had he either consulted the "Biographica Britannica" or the life of that prelate published in 1758, he must have been convinced of his own mistake. Indeed there is no such place as Freshingfield in Surrey; but the mistakes of modern British travellers are so numerous that we are not able in the compass of this work to mention them all, nor have we ever taken notice of them but when necessity to undeceive our readers laid us under the obligation." And

all the while he himself spelt and located the Suffolk village wrongly, and it is the more amusing because, although he had only three pages for a country, he found room for this lengthy digression in order to unveil the delinquency of a fellow-writer.

Finding my old Suffolk coachman's temperature had reached 103, I insisted on his going to bed at once. He recovered from the influenza, but not from the shock of having a clinical thermometer in his mouth. "The master meant it kindly," he told people, "but I have never been the same man since that thing was put in my mouth." On another occasion he hoped that the man who prevented barbed wire would never prevent anything else.

An old man was about to be married when his future bride died suddenly. He took the blow with philosophic calm, telling the clergymen, "I've been spared the marrying expenses, and that's summat, and I've been spared the burying expenses, and that's summat—*the Lord moves in a mysterious way.*"

Apropos of cant—a form of ignorance. After lunch at a Suffolk rectory I was entertained by the parson's wife and daughter. The latter having first sung a Moody and Sankey's hymn to melt the hardness of my heart, the former continued the process by sympathetic inquiries concerning my wife's state of body and mind. After it had been elicited from me that the lady was an invalid, the daughter, Janet, was dispatched to fetch a tract. Before she was half-way up the stairs, however, further inquiries having elicited from me that my wife was a confirmed invalid, the rector's wife absolutely broke off her conversation with me, to call to her daughter.

"Not the second long drawer, Janet, but the little top drawer, Mrs ——'s case is clearly one for the little top drawer." On arriving home I read out to my wife something of this sort—

"Sick one, you are not well!
So was Jonas Moore;
You think you will recover—
So DID HE.
. . . . . .
But he did not—HE DIED!"
etc., etc.

This was certainly not calculated to hearten invalids, but as a matter of fact the hearty laugh my wife enjoyed did her good.

The Suffolk people are more enamoured of politeness than truth. There is an old Suffolk adage, "None but a child or drunken man tells the truth"—the former because he knows no better, the latter because he has lost the power of self-control.

An old woman was remonstrated with by her parson for bowing at the name of the devil, "Well, you see, your Reverence, civility costs nothing, and you never can tell what will happen."

Recently alighting from a London motor bus, I asked the very polite conductor if he came from Suffolk. "No," he replied, but he called after me with the sweetest of smiles, "my father and mother did."

The late rector of Wilby, on whose hand, thrust out of his study window, a wild robin used to settle and feed, told me of an instance when a mother and son contradicted one another, and he quoted the mother to the son.

The son replied, "Lawks, you must not pay a mite o' regard to what them meetiners say."

A Suffolk man of whom I hired a dogcart once remarked to me, "Them chapel folk can't even tell a lie without leaving a hole to crawl out of."

A landlord, annoyed with the frequent broken promises of a tenant to pay his rent, complained to the said tenant's man, "I wish your master would keep his promises? do you think he is fit to preach." "Not preach," said the man proudly, "why, he's the champion liar for twenty miles round."

Yet one more example of their politeness. A curate told me of a deaf woman whom he was teaching, and who to his inquiry, "Can you hear?" replied, "Can't hear a word, deary, but yew go on!"

And of course parish clerks furnish instances of the disastrous use of ambitious language.

"Be sure and show this lady the antependium"—whereupon the clerk conducted her to what he called the pandemonium.

Another, when rebuked by his rector for reading out, "Praise him in his name of J. A. H.," replied, "I always thought that was the gentleman's initials."

And lastly, there was the clerk who, up to quite late in life, always read out the first line of the hymn, "Saviour, bless us —'ere we go"—'ere for here.

Mispronunciation of words is often exceedingly comic; there are the ambitious mistakes made by the somewhat educated, and the quite charming words which the simple rustic coins rather than mispronounces. Belonging to the former are the utterances of a farmer's wife who, most anxious to be correct, invariably said, "Is it not? did he not? have they not? and so on. Pointing to an old picture, she remarked, "This is my chief 'ances-TOR' and he was a 'bache-LOR.'"

"Do you approve of farming children?" inquired a tenant farmer of his new landlord. "Certainly not," said the squire gravely

"I'm so glad, I thought you wouldn't hold with their dressing in white and taking the sins off the godfathers and godmothers—and sich like."

But Londoners meet their match. "Your potatoes look well," said one, over the hedge. "Yees," was the reply. "How do you do it?" "Way I've got of my own." "How interesting; what is it?"

"These injuns are extra strong. These 'ere 'taters are extra full of eyes. Now I allus plant them 'twixt and between, and when the dry weather comes, my injuns, being extra strong, make them there 'taters' eyes water. So they allus water theirselves."

"This would be a sad world," remarked an aged female peasant, "if it were not for the blessed hope of *immorality* in the next."

"Look at her capacity, wrote the teacher of an unsuccessful teacher to her mother in explanation of the girl's low place on the class list (examination).

"Buy her a new one," wrote back the mother, "and her father will pay for it."

The country squire, Charles II. used to say, resembles a ship in the river until he gets in the great world, where he appears like a ship at sea. This is *sometimes* true still.

A certain honourable, who was anxious to secure a living for a friend, visited a big pompous City Company, in whose gift the appointment was.

"Who are you?" they asked.

"I did not wish," she afterwards told me, "to give myself airs, so I said,—'a parishioner.'"

"Vague," was their only response.

"An hon'rable," stiffly added the lady. To her great astonishment, the second reply elicited no more enthusiasm than the first had.

She felt compelled to use what she considered her trump card.

"My brother-in-law is Lord —— !"

The committee put their heads together, and their spokesman coldly announced the result—

"Never heard of him."

The lady's candidate was not successful.

I close the chapter with an epistle from a Suffolk village lassie—why she addressed it from the church is a mystery not yet solved by the clergyman who handed it to me—and with one more story.

"—— Church.

"To Rev. ——. Sir,—I wish to be marred Wedensday next march 15th at 2 o'clock in the afternoon—I am your faithfully— Miss Eliza ——."

And it was a Suffolk woman who, at last, after a tramp which, to her sick husband, seemed interminable, returned with a labelled bottle—the label with difficulty deciphered, and then not understood:—"To be taken in a recumbent posture." "Go and ask the neighbours what it means," he groaned. Five women, door after door, didn't "now"; the sixth, out of the top window, for the benefit of the others, "Of course, I now—and I've got one—but I've lent it."

CHAPTER XIII

PERSONAL

Again I ask—Was the night on the foul steamboat, when I was wrapped in white, my vigil for the knight errantry which really, though rarely so recognised, constitutes a leading part of the duties of H.M. inspectors of schools?

At a large public meeting at Ipswich in 1910, a well-known squire and a vicar compared H.M.I. to a "buffer" and a "peacemaker" respectively; and even his enemies will admit a resemblance to Don Quixote, when with his hired Rosinante, he tilts at windbags, if not windmills.

It was bad enough when Red Tape confined its head-quarters to Whitehall; but now that every county has its own establishment it is almost hopeless for the single lance of a helping H.M.I., who is, after all, but flesh and blood—and barely that—being, in fact, little more than flesh-clad code.

When, at the expiration of thirty-five years of service, and at the age of 63, I was refused an extension of a year, though appointed on the understanding that my time would expire at 65, I was told by one who knew that I went the wrong way to work. I suppose the education committee did not support my appeal to Whitehall. The fact is, the late chairman had tried to force my hand in reporting on a voluntary school; and as his hard work and generosity, which no one appreciates more than I do, had naturally won the hearts of his committee and officials, I knew any attempt to solicit their support as a committee was doomed to failure—though a large majority signed in my behalf, privately. As keen on efficiency as the said chairman was, I could not harry managers who had recently spent large sums and were quite willing to meet all requirements in reasonable time, and when he dictated a report for me in

anything but a suggestive spirit (to say the least of it), I was obliged to inform him as politely as I could that I declined to surrender an independence as dearly prized by H.M. inspectors of schools as by English judges. Perhaps it was because the teachers signed the memorial. But are not teachers British citizens? Would they not be allowed to sign—even in Siam—nay, which is worse, even if the Minister of Education were a Radical? And, of course, if *all* the teachers signed, it would form a a very small proportion of twelve thousand.

For thirty-five years, so to speak, on all fours, I had scrubbed at my district floor till gradually every part shone clean, one after another the most obstinate patches of inefficiency having disappeared.[1] Increased grants flowed in, and the county was materially benefited. But when the new L.E.A. played the proverbial broom in the matter of fresh or enlarged accommodation, I laid a hand upon that broom handle, and without loss of efficiency (as the L.E.A. themselves afterwards admitted), saved the county an unnecessary expenditure of the kind generally known as "municipal," a term that has yet to reach its full measure of destestation, for its hand has not yet done with other people's pockets.

A petition signed by 12,000 of the most influential people in East Suffolk—and it might have been doubled—was submitted by a Radical M.P., on my behalf, to Whitehall. The president for the time being (Mr Runciman), after throwing cold water on the plea of popularity, curtly refused. It was the cruellest of all cruel insinuations ever levelled at me, who have practically gone through much more than my share of hot water, so that others may taste the refreshing delights of efficiency, and have rather hammered into people any merits that I have, than wheedled them by miserably yielding to the weakness they themselves have been the first to thank me for shaking them out of—as soon as the pain was over.

Of course my friends comforted me—"You are but getting what you gave when you began your career"; but I never

[1] I could refer to twenty living clergymen to prove it, but, alas! the Conservatives had out-Radicalled Radicals by practically ejecting the clergy from their schools.

caused the retirement of a single zealous teacher, however different his methods to mine. More solid comfort is to be derived from the conviction that, had it rested with managers and teachers, the people who knew me best, the decision would have been reversed.

But as the Conservatives had out-radicalled the Radicals, I was sorely tempted to lift up my voice in an exceedingly bitter cry like Horatio's, "A plague upon both your houses," or like Lord C. Beresford's protest against Mr Runciman's predecessor, Mr M'Kenna, and when *Punch* refers to Lord Kitchener's case, as an example of how we reward our great men, I am assured that far better men than I have suffered.

I quote from the letter of a distinguished colonel :—

"*4th March* 1910.

"Dear Mr Swinburne,—I see by the *East Anglian* you are retiring from an ungrateful service. Red tape government departments do not want men of ideas and always rid themselves of them when they can do so without odium. In your case the odium has been risked. . . . "

And yet the present administration had honoured me by admitting that my view had been the right one in the case of Lowestoft.

Years ago my chief, Mr Synge, with whom I had many a delightful round at golf, strongly condemned the Lowestoft school structures.

Compared with what they originally were, they were splendid, but he never saw them as they originally were.

Nevertheless I loyally set to work to carry out his instructions, beginning at the worst cases, in two of which I proved by actual figures to the conference at Whitehall that the Black Hole of Calcutta provided a more liberal allowance of space to its suffocated victims than one of these overcrowded classrooms, and that the Nabob would certainly not have failed to get "the grant," had there been one, and had he applied for it. Nevertheless there was an appeal to parliament, Mr Synge being (alas !) abroad. The late Mr Sharpe was sent instead. Mr Sharpe's first question sealed my doom. "What time do they light the gas ?" Gas in Lowestoft schools !

He began by telling the rector not to be jealous of H.M.I. So far he ran with the hare, but all the rest of the way he was in the thick of the hounds. When I drew attention to the clause in the instructions which bore on overcrowding, he laughed, and in the presence of the managers said, "That clause is not worth the paper it's written on—I wrote it." This before managers! Of course I was over-ruled; but when at Whitehall I described my feelings as those of a Mohammedan who hears his pet bits of the Koran ridiculed in the presence of the unbelievers, Mr Acland, the then president, and Sir G. Kekewich laughed so heartily, and spoke so kindly to me, that I was not surprised to receive from Mr Sharpe a short epistle a week after, informing me that our intercourse must cease from the date of that letter.

I have received love-letters in my time, but none ever afforded me more profound pleasure than that one. And that I won a moral victory is proved by the managers having since gradually carried out all the improvements I suggested. Furthermore few inspectors have had the honour to receive, several years after (1909), a semi-official statement in black and white from the then chief. "Everything I saw confirms me in the conclusion I have always held, and I am not singular in holding it, that you were right and the Board were wrong on the occasion on which you tried to get some vile premises condemned."

Those who have suffered and eventually triumphed will, in view of the former pain, forgive the latter pleasure, and pardon this piece of egotism.

But alas, that pendulum! Now it swings too far the other way. Even people of limited means pay heavily to spend a few weeks on those Lowestoft cliffs, rising from those Lowestoft Denes, facing the morning sun, swept by some of the finest air in the world, and well watered and drained, in short an ideal playground for all England. Yet the two schools on that cliff are condemned, largely for want of playgrounds! About 200 yards away, along quiet ways, stretch the loveliest of Denes! But Red Tape pines for that melancholy prison-like yard called a playground, too small for organised games, spiking oneself not yet being regarded as a sport, however much spiking other things is.

I once had an assistant who was of all phonetic fanatics

the most fanatic. Had angels from heaven read to him he would have condemned the reading, unless founded on phonetics.

Nevertheless this officer more than once assured me that the attainments of the Suffolk county schools would shame that of many towns, being above those of the London schools he had inspected.

A county rector once, finding me single-handed, suggested his son's giving out dictation for me. I did not want his help, but purely out of courtesy and kindness I consented. His father that evening wrote to the board saying, "My son's name having been long on the list for inspectorship, and the need of more help being proved by your inspector to-day having solicited the help of my son, I granted it and now consider myself entitled to expect an early appointment," etc., etc.

Mr Cumin's letter to me, with my Woodbridge experience, were the nearest approach I ever had to a reprimand.

In the case of the latter, probably through Mr Fitzgerald, my questions found their way to *Punch*, to which I have had the rare experience of contributing objectively as well as subjectively. Let me explain. Four questions were generally set in a card, three straightforward and easy, one for the benefit of the "ladder" boy who means to climb to the University, in other words, a question demanding an uncrammable reply.

The list of questions in *Punch* conveys a wrong impression. They were the difficult ones at the end of each set of four questions—the questions marked No. 4 in each card—picked out and grouped together as if on one card. I quote from *Punch*:—

"The Three R.'s in East Suffolk

The *Ipswich Journal* gives some specimens of the questions put by one of Her Majesty's School Inspectors in East Suffolk. Like the Great Panjandrum at the Barber's Wedding, Mr A. J. Swinburne, H.M.I., seems to have amused himself by playing at the game of 'Catch-as-catch-can' with the East-Anglian adolescents, who, if they tripped not over his educational traps and pitfalls, must have been as wary as well informed.

'Ships are said to be lost on the Downs, and sheep are fattened on the Downs—where and what are the Downs?'

Here the Great Panjandrum was decidedly 'down on' the Suffolk students, and it is to be hoped they were downy enough to dodge his clever conundrum. Perhaps H.M.I. thinks the Three R.'s ought to be supplemented by a fourth—Riddles. Here are a few more of his artful posers—

'What right has India to be called the Pearl of the British Crown?'

'If you wished to buy a great lot of crockery-ware wholesale for a large firm, where would you go to?'

'If a gentleman goes to Holyhead, Harwich, or Folkestone, what place would he most likely be going to sail to?'

'Why is it light sooner in Suffolk than in Cornwall?'

The latter question is for 'Age 8, Standard II.' We hope the youthful encyclopædist to whom it was put, being, happily, 'more than seven,' hit upon what is obviously the right answer; viz., 'Owing to the shining in the former happy county of a special local luminary in the person of the Great Panjandrum of School Inspectors.'"

However real the pain I may have experienced from the refusal to extend my time may be, it can never blind me to the cordial relations which, throughout, subsisted between my employers and myself.

For some thirty years I used to watch the list of H.M. Inspectors in Whitaker with even more than the time-honoured Jack's interest in his beanstalk.

Steadily my name rose, and annually I drew my wife's attention, as Jack his mother's, to the rising bean plant. Picture my indignation when, on opening, not long ago, my new Whitaker, I found that my name, which was close to the summit when last I looked, now by one fell swoop lay close to the bottom of the list. That list had been made alphabetical; and the change was no superficial one. I think this was one of the cruellest disappointments in my official career.

Senility is one thing, seniority another, and seniority is not affected by changes of the Pharaoh. Like many another

veteran, whose vigour had been well preserved, in addition to my personal chagrin, I felt that my experience was a valuable asset to my employers; and I am still convinced that in such cases the loss is the master's and the country's rather than the dismissed servant's, when raw juniors, however talented, are recklessly thrust up. Anyhow they might have let the list stand, on their democratic principles.

Under Sir Francis Sandford, Sir P. Cumin, and Sir G. Kekewich, besides my chiefs, Messrs Scott Coward, Fitch, Synge, Currey, Rankine, Jackson, Holmes, no man ever had a happier time than I.

To account for Sir George's final animosity against the clergy is a problem beyond my powers of solution. I know they loved him in those days, as I did and do, and every one who heard his famous remark at Saxmundham, "If any man is a friend of education he is my friend," loved him too. I don't think there was a public man in England better loved. No visits of London officials to a country district ever did so much good to education as his.

Town people, when they cry up the bloodless official who never appears except through the printer's devil, little realize the needs of country teachers. Schools are not, and never will be, like roads, post offices, workhouses, sewers, and so forth. Schools have to do with flesh and blood, and young flesh and blood; and if they are numbered and ticketed, like convicts, England will feel it, and once more the biter will be bitten.

In 1903 a colleague wrote to me—

"I look upon Jackson's appointment as a scandal; but nothing surprises me nowadays. The Education Act is a big leap in the dark; and these appointments are minor leaps in the dark. Heaven only knows how it will all work out."

But even the Board of Education soon saw its mistake, and Mr C. Jackson left Whitehall.

I had expected to have to fix my Inspections at 6 A.M. at the latest, and to have to ride bare-back to schools, à la Australia, when Mr C. Jackson was appointed; but I found him a kind and true friend, and his encouraging

remark about the Prize Scheme came like sunshine between cruel storms. " It's dogged as does it," he wrote to me.

In 1905 one of the ablest of our H.M.I.'s, who, I am told, but for his threatening legal action, would have had to retire before his time, wrote to me :—

" 22/10/1905.

" And so you liked the conference. Has a change come over the aspect of affairs or are we only being lubricated for further deglutination ? "

And again, " Cheer up, merit must have its reward."

Had I been my own butler or gamekeeper I should scarcely have been refused the modest request of one year's extension after thirty-five years of faithful discharge of duty, made by all East Suffolk, except a possibly jealous clique. But there was a bright side too, *e.g.* Mary, Duchess of Hamilton (to mention one of many), wished, I was informed by the teacher who solicited her signature, that she had two names, so as to sign them both to the petition for Mr Swinburne's extension of service. And there were many other kind things said and done. I myself was sorrowfully informed by a leading Radical politician that it was not with Radicals as it was with other bodies of men, *e.g.* Conservatives, for whereas the Conservative leaders pulled together, it was quite a different thing the other side, where every one pulled a different way ! I expect he knew. But no doubt the President takes the natural view that he too is on all fours scrubbing away the inspectorial dirt, and judging by some of the specimens I some years ago saw at a conference, the distinction between " senile " and " senior " had been suffered to lapse, and his scrubbing was not unnecessary, though I felt I was not a dirty spot to need it. So perhaps it is all for the best.

Not having committed a crime I cannot well publish my photo in a newspaper ; but anyone who wishes may see me, and if he pronounces me senile, even now at sixty-five, I will re-consider the position. After all, it's very pleasant to carry with one into one's retirement one's best faculties and vigour ; and I enjoy, of course, my full pension.

Apropos of the Gorst Period, I was highly complimented by Sir George Kekewich when I stood alone in protesting

against a precipitate summons of all the outdoor staff to Whitehall, without any agenda paper.

I said, in my speech, that I too highly valued the hearing always readily conceded to me by my colleagues, to risk it by remarks on the spur of the moment; and in this case it was left to Messrs Cusack to inform me, by an advertising circular that morning, that the object of the conference was to meet our new head, Sir J. Gorst.

Sir George whispered that it was the very thing they wanted said.

Democracy seems to work itself out in a multiplication of minor tyrants; one big one would be preferable, for then there would be an appeal to one trained to govern instead of to a heterogeneous conglomeration of conflicting interests. The climbing demagogues and leaders are too busy with their own rise; and if they were not, they have neither the knowledge nor the training to qualify them to control the permanent officials under their presidentship. Worse still, if they attempt, for then it is a case of the gardener on the coachman's box,—poor horses' mouths!

It was about April 1911, curiously enough the very month to which my extension would have reached had it been granted, that, after perusal of the Holmes-circular episode I fell asleep and dreamed.

Of all his colleagues his oldest friend, I saw again that mother's face, as she bent over him fifty years ago at Merchant Taylors' School—a face the gentle, refined, tender expression of which his life has so faithfully reflected—I saw again the Yorkshire moors, which we in early manhood used to explore together, and felt again the giddy helplessness from which his steady hand delivered me, on a cliff as steep as any Swiss one, when I was half-way down, unable to stir either way. I heard again his voice, as over thirty years ago, in our improvised unofficial conferences at Southport and elsewhere, we exhausted the patience of the most patient of hosts by extending far into the night the educational discussions started in the early morning. And again I listened to him when as chief inspector his visits to Suffolk cheered myself and Mr Steele and Mr Hunt, stimulating to renewed exertion—all this I saw and heard, and it suddenly changed into a parliamentary scene, in which my own grievances were

speedily forgotten as I contemplated the pitiable figure cut by Mr Runciman, who seemed to be cowering like a hunted creature at the mercy of both sides of the house.

Mr Kellaway (L., Bedford).—Is it not a fact that this practice of issuing secret and confidential circulars applies entirely to the period since the appointment of the present Chief Secretary of the Education Department, and did not exist during the time of his predecessor ?

Mr Runciman.—I should like to have notice of that question. My present information does not accord with that of my hon. friend. Communications are always passing between the board and its servants of a confidential character.

Lord A. Thynne (U., Bath).—Is it not a fact that the circular was submitted for the right hon. gentleman's approval before issue, and that the fact that he did not peruse it before it was issued is not due to any fault of any permanent official?

Mr Runciman.—No, sir ; the circular was not submitted to me for approval before issue. I have stated over and over again that the circular was printed and distributed under the sanction given by the Permanent Secretary and with the concurrence of the author of the memorandum.

" The scene was changed." It was the mighty gathering of the " nutters," [1] and newspaper cuttings were falling like a heavy snowstorm Here are four picked up and read before they melted away :—

" Mr Pickles said that Sir Robert Morant's chief intellectual excitement consisted in constructing hypotheses of mistrust. It was an accepted maxim of government that a Minister should either back his officials or sack them, and it was therefore for Mr Runciman to deal with the position in his own way. The latest circular was the revelation of a policy of Machiavellian subtlety. The circular was untrue, unjust, and malicious in effect. Mr Holmes had written things of which he ought to be, and probably was, thoroughly ashamed. Now, 70,000 teachers would no longer submit to such procedure. Sir Robert Morant was not the only one at the Board of Education who had shown the class taint. The best university men would not countenance this snobbishness. Until these problems were solved the board would

[1] N. U. T. = National Union of Teachers.

continue to lack the confidence of the teachers and of the public, and Mr Runciman would endanger a reputation from which much had been expected. Influence was still the golden key to every place and position. The teachers were tired of their forty years' wandering in the wilderness. Draconian measures were needed at the board—the dry rot of officialdom must be uptorn. The last remnant of bureaucratic despotism must be removed (cheers)." . . . Mr J. W. Bunn said that it would add to the gaiety of nations if they could have the present educational comic opera printed. . . . and then I thought I heard the voice of one of the Parliamentary leaders howling in an Educational wilderness. For, in the House of Commons, teachers are as one-eyed men leading the blind. . . . "But the action of the union is not being directed against Mr Holmes. The circular was but the indiscreet publication and expression of the spirit and system of the administration of the Board of Education, which the teachers have long known to be harmful, not only to themselves, but also to the general public. . . . It is not a question of teachers alone, but the future of the children in their training. Continual requests are made to the teachers to teach Civics and Citizenship, and this they do with pleasure and earnestness, but citizenship demands a free and open career for talent, irrespective of social class. . . . That little group of officials who now throttle the progress of national education shall not longer disgrace the chambers of Whitehall (loud cheers). . . . Teachers would never rest until they had broken down this system, whereby Government clerks could mismanage, worry, traduce, and put to endless trouble the real workers in the schools; whereby social prestige and patronage were placed in front of the advance of the boys and girls and young men and women who owed their education to the elementary teachers (cheers)." . . . Moreover, I heard a female voice from Lowestoft: —"An example of the policy pursued by chief permanent officers of the Board *during the last nine years in particular*; proving it to be but one part of a whole administrative system, intended to discredit schools, scholars, teachers, and inspectors not belonging to a certain social class" . . . and I found myself muttering, "and this—to their best friend, too." For no inspector ever loved teachers better than Mr Holmes

did—and their once unstinted Hosannahs in his praise had so quickly changed—almost to Crucifixion point. In my dream I seemed to hear again teacher after teacher's heartfelt prayer —" Leave us not in the hands of one of ourselves—they are so hard on us." But the fagot is not as the single stick—and the loudest voices in conferences are not from those who carry the most weight at home.

In my dream I climbed again the stairs of Whitehall, for rural inspectors are lost to view behind the glamour of the Metropolitan clique—and somehow a Siamese juggernaut seemed to be crushing meritorious officials, and Toynbee Hall to be turning into Whitehall, while one tall, handsome, frock-coated and generally delightful young, newly-appointed officer whispered to me mockingly :—

" To have been loved of the old Pharaoh is to be unloved by the new. . . . Come from Winchester School and sit on some one's door step, and you will be sure of £200 a year" —and he vanished and I was in the midst of chattering shades of the giant H.M.I.'s of yore who crowded round the late Mr King while he groaned over " spiritual weakness in high places," and murmurs in which I could distinguish a few words here and there, such as :—" grind all our bones to powder," " hopeless autocracy," died out as the spectres were lost in darkness. Meanwhile I beheld better men than I can ever hope even to imitate, being ruthlessly thrust into pits, like Joseph, by their brethren with a huge majority at their backs ; and in my dream I seemed to be suddenly making a speech to them. " After all," I said, " you have not to drink the hemlock, as a better man even than you did ; and think of the extreme wing of the democratic views that are ousting you—and what they are doing—think of the poor nuns and priests in the recent Portuguese revolution, shot at, like rats, by the brothers of the very people they had befriended. Mr Lloyd-George, at Mile End, coolly laid the blame of that spoliation on the aristocracy—but it was a very great advance for him to have to allow at all that the monasteries were the friends of the sick and poor. And we must be thankful for that.

" Yes. Mile End ! The scene of Wat Tyler's murderous assault on the Law and the Church—whose heads they cut off —an assault which has not even yet lost its foul savour—being

indeed the seed of many a bitter fruit that has yet to be digested, for the revolutionary doctrines now preached at chapels are nothing more nor less than the seeds sown by Calvin long ago—for only the religious half of Calvinism is dead. The only speeches I remember, whose brilliance and self-deceiving earnestness can compare with those of the Mile End one, are the old attacks on the same Church and Lords at Birmingham, by him, who made all England tremble with the very denunciation which he himself would now be the loudest in all England to denounce. Labour means well enough; but it has not yet soared to Matt. Arnold's 'sweetness and light'; and the dawn will once more find the result of such eloquence—like a rocket-case sodden in the dewy grass—Oh how unlike the heavenly rain of fire last night!" And much more beside, I said—which space—ever merciful to my readers—compels me to omit—and suddenly I found myself in the august presence of Sir R. Morant, whose brusque "Do you want anything?" sent to the four winds all my purpose of reminding him of my claims, and comparing recent times to a Feast of "Pass-over," etc.

"No," I replied with equal precision and bluntness: and the sudden change to warmth of manner, on the part of Sir Robert, amusingly reminded me of a similar volteface on the part of the late Sir E. Kerrison—whose "shoots" used to be so eagerly sought after—when on the occasion of my first visit to him, and in reply to his question, "Do you still shoot?" I replied with the same monosyllable. But suddenly the Irish M.P. whose interview with Sir Robert had preceded mine, and who had kept me waiting over an hour, and who still bore his golf clubs, burst in, to demand peremptorily "an escort," for, said he, "there's a savage dog loose about the place, belonging, I believe, to one of the women inspectors. Its bad enough to have women Inspectors—but if we've to have their d——d dogs too. . . ."

And in the roar of laughter which overcame even Sir Robert's well-proved official self-control, I awoke—wondering whether there was any truth ever—in a dream.

But to resume:—Mr Acland's circular compared with L.E.A. measures is now regarded (retrospectively) as moderate and reasonable; and in point of fact it is to its beneficent

and strengthening clauses wisely acted upon—that the voluntary schools owe the vitality which has carried them through the terrible recent strain.

By the way, when Sir John Gorst's bill was doomed—the question arose at the education head-quarters as to who should break the news to the unfortunate father of the said bill.

Obviously the Duke of Devonshire's character and advantages, experiences, rank, etc., pointed him out as the proper person. So much tact, such *bonhommie*, etc., etc.

The duke, acceding with reluctance, strode straight, I am informed, to Sir J. Gorst's room—and opening the door jerked in—" Sir Gorst, your d——d Bill's dead," and closing the door, departed. It was his kindest way of doing things—all the same.

Inspectors deserve all the abuse they get and more, if they do as one of my chiefs did, when asked to say something to fire the enthusiasm of a large gathering of rural teachers.

After a few words on the obvious danger of zeal he produces a blue book and begins to read. Worse still—the extracts are his own!

Yet worse—they were extracts declined insertion by my Lords! Another chief, in more recent times, might almost have been brought to book by the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. He expected nursery stories from five years' old to whom they were even worse than speeches forced on bashful silent men.

Nor had any story but the particular one in his own mind any interest or value to that examiner. How many a child's mind is like a lock—to be blamed because the examiner's key doesn't fit—even if he has a bunch! Mr Fussell, H.M.I., entering a school—somewhat shabbily attired, as was his wont—was mistaken by the teacher for a commercial traveller.

" For goodness sake don't come here now," said the schoolmaster without looking up from his desk—" I'm new to the place and I'm expecting that old brute Fussell every minute."

Yes—but providentially even H.M.I. sometimes hears the truth.

H.M.I.'s lot in a charming county like Suffolk is indeed an enviable one—his flight is beyond the flight of ordinary men—and whereas the county is split up into several social shrines with their surrounding worshippers—H.M.I.'s orbit

embraces many shrines. He covers the area of some fifty doctors, and vague notions of imperial sentiment, grants and culture, to use a Suffolk phrase "hang to him."

But what mortal shall escape unpleasantness? H.M.I. has his full share—quite enough to have a breezy effect on his humility. For example:—

"Oh she thought it a dreadful day—she did *hate* it"—when conscious of having tried to make Inspection Day all smiles—H.M.I. is foolish enough to inquire what are the associations left in the mind of the servant who (he is whisperingly informed) was as a girl "inspected by him some years ago."

But it is no better in Derbyshire; my colleague there, leaving a school, overhears a boy remark—not meant for his ear—"good shootance," and was fatuous enough to ask what it meant ("good riddance") though he had tried his very best. Examiners, snakes and dentists must resign themselves—and be dreaded. The sweeter their smile, the worse their bite.

Was ever an H.M.I. more deservedly respected and beloved than the late Mr Synge?

As late as 1911 on Lowestoft Pier, when casually conversing with a "Tripper," I once more heard his praises sung.

"Although it's twenty years or more ago," said the man, "I remember how at the end of a long morning, Mr Synge would gather a few of the older scholars (especially the failures) and encourage them with sensible advice—laying special stress on the importance of *writing out* points in which they felt any weakness, etc., all, of course, extra or overtime work, voluntarily undertaken for our good—and it did a lot of good——"

But how did that Tripper end?

"Oh Law! how glad we used to be when it was all over—how we used to roar out 'Now we'll sing a song and drink a cup of cyder.'[1] It has worried me a bit since, to think they must have heard it, and even the masters joined in."

A school manager with whom I am staying asks—

"Which shall it be, now—golf or billiards?"

"Which you please," I reply.

"No, no—which YOU please—you're here for YOUR pleasure, not mine."

[1] (Mr Syder was Mr Synge's conscientious sub-inspector.)

"How sick you must be of schools, Mr Swinburne?" is a common comment from parsons' wives and daughters and others—where least expected.

Another manager greets me, "Such a dreadful year—master's wife, bronchitis—mother-in-law, cancer—staying with us—and to crown it all—*you've* come."

And there is the "humbug" of the aristocratic manager—brother of a lord. But what mortal shall escape "Humbug?"

It is snowing hard, and my host is studying Bradshaw—it is at lunch—he says:—

"2.15—a capital train—no stoppages—4.30 the next, not such a good train—but don't hurry away—accident lately by that 4.30 train—but should so like you to stay—however, don't let me interfere with your plans, I know what business is—and calls, eh! ah, yes—take another glass before you go—No?—Oh, we should so have liked you to have stayed to dinner—but you couldn't of course—some excellent wine in bottle—didn't think of opening it for lunch—ah, well! business first you see—should so much have enjoyed your staying—you really ought to put up here, you know—headquarters, week—week? month if you like—charmed to see you, Lady H. too—you know any time—musn't forget—" (Shall I nail him down to dinner and a bed to-night—with a view to so doing, out slips my watch, hoping to shame him by seeing there is only twenty minutes to finish lunch and go a mile and a half.) "Ah! time flies, yes—I see—you want to be off" (no time to protest) "well, as you *will* go," etc., etc.

But perhaps the best instance is that of an agonised schoolmaster, whose readiness covered even his multitudinous sins.

He had set this sentence on the blackboard to parse the day after a (to him) painful inspection.

"This teacher says the inspector is a fool."

What was his horror to see the inspector enter the school for something forgotten yesterday! In an instant he roared in a tone of fury, "John—put in those brackets *I told you to put in* at once—how dare you, sir!" and it read: "This teacher (says the inspector) is a fool."

In my own experience I can vouch for the similar astounding readiness on the part of a rural schoolmaster, whom as

I drove up, I saw out in his own garden with two boys digging for him during the school hours.

We had about the same distance to go to get to the school, he to the back and I to the front door—but I had a fast horse.

I never saw him start even—but when I entered he turned from a book-shelf smiling, a book in hand to ask my opinion as to its suitability for use in Standard V.

I was dizzy—doubting my own senses, for two hours of constant watching—until 11.30 a.m.; when, after a burst of bluster which almost convinced me I must have had an optical delusion, he grovelled, and confessed, and was forgiven—with a grave warning.

But we all have our troubles, and a perusal of the following will reduce them by comparison with worse ones—I wish I could reproduce the caliginous caligraphy.

March 1st, 1892.

Please Sir,—I am Im, formed you are the head Gentleman, that expeter, ofer Schools, I have had ten In famely and they are all alive, and I have three tending the School, and the eldest, will be twelve, next october, and if you, please, Sir, as I have a Lady would Like to take her the mondy the last of febauary Sir I hope you will take It in siderration As I am a sickly women and allways under the ducters hands, and that you Sir, will see, As I have six at home the lady is going to keep her onwith her Lestons, reading and writing so as a gentleman I hope you will regrant me as she will do better by her than I can—Your struly, Mrs ——

A village in Suffolk.

Sir,—I have sent yu my dectors bill so you will find I have told you the traugh.

Have other H.M.I.'s had to appear before rural magistrates as well as a metropolitan one?

A constable informed me a few years ago that I must summon some gipsies, "who," said he, "have let their horses into a lonely meadow belonging to you; and upon a villager's locking the said horses in the said field, the said gipsies have broken the said gate to let them out."

After I have been duly primed as to the right term to use

to the chairman of the five magistrates, which term of course I, in my confusion, apply to the clerk, who covers his head with his hands in horrified abashment, I am eventually given to understand by the said clerk that a summons cannot be granted—

"We cannot prove that they broke the pound."

"They broke five pounds" I replied "for as my wife plays at farming and it was springtime—the crop was spoiled." The clerk almost had a fit at my temerity. "We are very sorry, Mr Swinburne, but *no one saw them do it*"—says the chairman, who had most courteously and kindly arranged the time of hearing to suit my convenience. Lengthy parleying followed—the drift setting against me—

"Then," I at length rejoined "I wish to have it quite clearly ruled for my own guidance. If no one sees the breakage of the pound, it appears there is no case. I propose, therefore, to suggest to my wife that she should recoup herself for her loss by turning her horses into —— Park, one of the magistrates' homes, and I myself hope, unseen, to break the pound for her—and so forth. . . ."

The magistrates whispered together for a few minutes and then came a voice :—

"Mr Swinburne, we grant you the summons."

But Justice moves "claudo pede"—and so did my car, for on me fell, of course, the lion's share of the pursuit of the fugitive gipsies. To begin with, a boy shot out of one of the many cross streets in the suburbs of Ipswich and pierced my *bonnet* armour with the lance-like shaft of a butcher's cart.

"The boy, ah! where was he?" Miraculously unhurt! but the sole witness—a local preacher—when seized upon by my chauffeur, to testify to the motor's obvious innocence, declined, "I dont wish to *hut* either side." So strong is Prejudice! When at last I *did* find the Police—they, of course, being "town," could not take up a country case—much less beard the lion in his den—the gipsy in the fair; and one of them, upon my protesting, referred me blandly to the hymn "When angry passions rise," etc., etc. Days after, when I had abandoned the chase, a handsome woman with two stalwart grown up sons halted at my sanctuary's window.

"There is one God over us all," was her opening remark—

"Yes, and he wrote the commandments, one of which is, 'Thou shalt not steal' was my reply. Nevertheless, an awe as of Bible lands and times, a romantic Arabian Nights—Grimm—Andersen—Pilgrim's Progress—sentiment crept over me. No wonder the poor are at the mercy of this self-constituted lower order of priest and practitioner combined, missionaries to us heathens, with whom intermarriage (high or low) is an abomination. The "Homer"—as they call it in Suffolk—told.

"But will I ask the kind lady?"

"I will; but I am glad that I did not personally attempt an arrest at Ipswich" with an admiring look at the splendid physique of the two sons.

"Lor' bless yer, one suffers with 'is liver and t'other's as mild as a tender lamb. . . ."

We squared it; and the following year, when the van reappeared, a most interesting and picturesque village moot, led by its chairman, silently and slowly, and without taking any action, ejected it; but the silence on the part of the gipsies half-concealed and half-revealed "language which does not admit of publication."

Space forbids the insertion of the details of my appearance before the Metropolitan magistrate, on the occasion when, to save a simple many-parcelled Suffolk farm-wife from the robbery I saw in the eye of a frock-coated gentleman seated near her, I drew my own great coat like a red-herring across the track of the would-be thief—and caught him, and landed him at the Guildhall—though at a considerable personal inconvenience; and with no thanks from anybody except the superintendent of the police and his merry men.

Absent-minded men are often misunderstood; and of the five times when I have been suspected of being a thief respectably attired, I select two. The first may serve as an excuse for a few lines of family history.

There are no other Swinburnes in East Anglia—save only the Swinbornes of Essex who are descended from the Swinburnes of the North, and who in the fifteenth century possessed Coldham Hall and vast estates in Suffolk and Essex, estates which passed by marriage to the Berners and the Rookwoods who used to own Easton Park, now the seat of

the Duke of Grafton. The brasses at Little Horkesly are among the best preserved monuments in England; and the energy which has won world wide fame for Iseult has done the same for Isinglass.

Sipping coffee one evening not long ago at Ipswich Station, my eye caught sight of a parcel lying on a chair and addressed Swinburne, Esq., which I naturally supposed to have been sent by some tradesman for me—I noticed that the undergraduate-like youth, who stood next to me, also had his eye on that parcel—and on me—and when in due course I left, taking the parcel with me, he had his hand on me too. "Hi! that's mine——"

"No—there is no other Swinburne in East Anglia."

"There may not have been last night, there is now. . . ." Mutual and angry suspicion soon gave way to laughter and friendship. He was a younger son of Sir John Swinburne of Capheaton, and on his way to Hollesley agricultural college, and we travelled on together, addressing one another as cousins.

The other occasion was when, on the way, with an undergraduate friend, many years ago to witness the Grand National Steeple Chase, we had to pass through Edge Hill tunnel without lights. Our first class compartment being full, my friend and I stood "to oblige" with our backs to the two doors, when suddenly in pitchy darkness the door behind me against which I leaned flew open; and it was only by clutching at the two "bow-windowed" well-to-do betting men, who sat next to me, that I saved myself from an awful death. My fingers may have caught hold of one of their watch chains on their protruding waistcoats.

Pale in the returning light, I gasped something about a terrible escape—but it was as clear as that welcome sunshine, that the only idea in the minds of all six racing men was. "Well—I never—the latest trick! We're sharp enough; but his quiet and virtuous-looking make-up beats even us."

CHAPTER XIV

ANSWERS

THE replies here tabulated must not be regarded as anything like evidence of inefficiency. They are of course exceptional, occurring similarly in all answers to examination papers in all ranks of life, and while lightening with innocent diversion the arduous task of self-improvement, they serve to fix the correct answer in the memory.

Asked to write about the Heights of Abraham, some pupil teachers discussed wolves and foxes; others, Boer generals; and one said the French officers "fell over the cliffs into the river, and then wrote the elegy in a churchyard." Asked to paraphrase

> "And O you mortal engines, whose rude throats
> Th' immortal Jove's dread clamours counterfeit,
> Farewell—Othello's occupation's gone."

A pupil teacher wrote :—

"Goodbye you locomotives, which will not last for ever; you made such a noise that the lasting shouts of Jove could not be heard. Adieu to the thing that is departed that passed away Othello's time."

Another :—"I regret to say that for want of time, etc.—I shall be unable to complete especially as for the following reasons—I should have, had I had time, finished it with so much credit." Reasons follow—and he wasted as much time as would have sufficed for the real answers.

A very matter of fact reproduction from memory of a well-known passage in Romeo and Juliet was given by a pupil teacher aged 17.

"A traveller whilst taking a walk one night called the attention of a lady to some tops of fruit trees. The bright

rays of the moon were shining upon the tops of those trees giving them a silvery appearance.

"In reply to this the lady said in a stern reproof, 'Use no foul language against the moon, for it remains visible to us not for long. By and by it will vanish away to display the form of its richness and the variety of its phenomena in other regions of the world.'"

Another paraphrasing—

> "By torch and trumpet fast arrayed
> Each horseman drew his battle blade."

wrote :—"Every horseman who joined in the dreadful battle, drew his battle axe which he had with him. He also had a torch and a trumpet."

Another on the lines "The path of glory leads but to the grave" wrote :—"Not just because they are rich men, but those that are good are the ones to be in glory."

Another pupil teacher being asked "Who wrote this poem," answered "Alfred Tennyson." Teacher, "Hush, girl, *Lord* Tennyson—name another poet." "Please sir, Longfellow, Burns, Shakespeare." "Well done, and one of their poems? What—can't tell me one of Shakespeare's plays?" "Please sir, Domestic Economy."

A pupil teacher on school furniture :—"The instrument of corporal punishment is also perhaps, a part of the school furniture. It should be of cane or leather, never hard wood, because bone disease is sometimes caused by bruises inflicted by sticks."

Long words are their delight, but that "fine feathers do not make fine birds"—in literature or dress—they will not remember.

"School expeditions must be kept clean and ticketed." Did he mean museum exhibitions? Bookishness is ever to the fore. "Light must come from the left side. A defect in this direction might lead to squint and if very bad end in blindness."

Another writes on sick rooms :—"A sheet perforated with carbolic acid is the exception nowadays. It should be the rule." Bookishness peeps out of this answer on school expeditions (from Chester) "For history you will go, say, to Runnymede," and Exeter schoolboys are to visit the Tower of London.

In arranging a time-table :—" The constant aim must be to move the centres of activity from point to point in the cerebrum."

" Short pencils causing the child to put his head close to the paper to see what the point is doing." She need not be anxious, anyone who knows schools can tell you how exceedingly rare points are.

" Large rooms are very dangerous to physical feeling."

" Wear flannel ; it ridges the skin, and gets rid of the matter which the pores are ever execrating."

" Avoid tight lacing. Nowadays people have a great tendency to look slight and tall, but a person who is natural and abstains from such degradations is by far the better looking of the two. If life is wanted, garters must not be tight."

" Anyone who is afraid of having a thick waist let her think of Venus de Medici—the God of Beauty—whose height was 5 feet 2 inches and who possessed a waist of 27 inches."

" Wool is inflammable—and therefore less dangerous in the event of fire."

After all the girl had something to say for herself " in " generally meaning " not."

" Tight lacing is horrible, leaving no room for the expansion of the feelings."

" Mutton broth makes excellent beef tea."

Too often it is book learning rather than their own experience, *e.g.* " two baths every day, one hot and one cold ! "

" We must daily try our best to develop our mussels."

" Be out in the fresh air as often as possible." As a matter of fact you have to drive them out in the play intervals at their schools.

Debating societies, please note a budding female teacher's opinion about you :—" Debating Societies are often the means of ruining homes and home life. A man's place after the day's work is done is beside his own fire, often he is drawn away to a certain society. Unhappily it does not always end in debating but gradually, by getting with bad companions, he is led on to drink, cards and numerous other vices, and this means a forsaken home, forsaken wife and children, and often to prison or suicide. Debating societies are evidently best for single persons."

Another on the same subject :—" There are so many vile and evil attractions in the present day, and are so attractive."

Another wrote :—" Cranmer was an imminent man. . . . Raising his left hand to heaven he thrust the other into the flames without making a sound. He said " Thou has done it " and turning to Wolsey he said " Oh Wolsey, Wolsey, had I but served, etc."

Want of common sense is too often displayed, *e.g.* In answer to an arithmetic sum one gives the weight of sixteen planks (ordinary) " 45 tons."

Another—Height of class room " 100,966 feet."

Allowance must, however, be made for natural nervousness—Asked the date of her birth, a girl of eighteen for the life of her cannot name the year. How should she know, for example when Edward I. came to the throne ?

And two others cannot give you the name of a play of Shakespeare—after reciting from " King John " and the " Merchant of Venice," with the books actually in their pockets at the time.

I quite agree with the adult teacher who wrote :—" The process of digestion may be said to begin in the kitchen."

Another :—" Too much of one thing is as bad as too little of another thing."

In reply to a question about the wisdom of tight lacing, high heels, etc. another adult teacher writes :—" Well may the question be asked," and that is all she writes.

" The clinical thermometer should be held in the mouth while the patient holds his breath for five minutes. This is too fatiguing for a patient seriously ill."

Writing on green vegetables :—" Sailors who have been living for a considerable time on dried substances experience a longing and dissatisfied feeling. They also help to make excellent soup."

It must, however, be borne in mind that if only a part of this knowledge, limited though it be, eventually reaches the masses of the people an incalculable amount of unnecessary loss, waste, and error will be saved. On the uses of drill one well writes :—" In some schools the mind is crammed the body cramped."

Another :—" Gives him a noble bearing, and so enables him to get a situation."

Many of these teachers seem half frightened of praising the physical side for its own sake.

"It makes them stronger, *and so they do their lessons better*."

They forget that the school exists for the child, not the child for the school.

"Fire only warms the exterior—drill warms the blood."

"The temperature of a room should be tested by frequently taking the patient's temperature."

Explain what is meant by the term "deposit." "Deposits can be made by married women over seven."

Here are two Westminster ideas of country life:—"The country child is not likely to have much use for arithmetic in after life." "The country lad's limited sphere of life."

Describe with plan the battle of Agincourt. Plan carefully shunned. She writes:—"For a vivid description of this battle, Shakespeare's 'Henry V.' should be read, and by this description one is able to follow the battle and see for oneself something of what it really was."

"If the school be in a geological place collect specimens." Where is it not so?

How to teach the geography of Europe. The only practical hints she gives is "To compare Europe with England. By doing this" she continues "the apperception masses would be put in order, the correlated ideas would be connected and the mind in a receptive condition." This is all she writes.

A Wesleyan pupil teacher writes in a discussion of the value of paper as compared with slates, "The temptation to deceive is partly removed."

Writing on thrift:—"Mortgages paying 7 per cent are a good investment—but a high rate of interest should be regarded with suspicion. I prefer Bank of England."

"Beware of huge profits." They try hard to praise the P.O. But their hearts are not in it. "Invest in Tit Bits."

The fault of these answers, however, is not to be laid exclusively at the door of the candidates. Some of the questions must appear to them as the fences in the Grand National Steeplechase course must appear to horses that are not steeplechasers. With the right hand so to speak

we urge upon them to be concise, and with the left hand, by dealing out extra sheets of foolscap, we feed their literary dropsy. "Crescit indulgens sibi dirus Driveller," if I may substitute a word for Hydrops. A stiff question at the outset often acts like a barbed wire fence on the candidates. They never recover from the shock of it. Examiners have not yet learned to descend to the level of the examined.

Asked for a list of subjects for object lessons, a pupil teacher wrote: "Things they see every day need one lesson. Lessons requiring twice would be camel, elephant—and probably the umbrella." In spite of instructions which besought teachers to moderate their desire for those intoxicatingly popular animals.

"There are not many advantages in reading silently, as the teacher cannot tell whether the children are pronoucing (sic) their words correctly. It is an advantage, if a child's hand has been hurt." Does she refer to pointing with the fingers—also long condemned.

How note-books should be kept—"clean and covered"—(nothing more). "Note-books should be of considerable size (to prevent having two or three), in our own simple style, fit for anyone to look at with pleasure, and kept close at hand for any spare moments."

But again I would suggest more suitable questions.

How futile to demand *e.g.* genealogies of foreign royalties from candidates who write about "Plymouth Rock" as the "landing-place of the Pilgrim Fathers"; and who are eloquent on "reigns of government" (for reins).

What folly to ask for a comparison of Henry IV. and Henry VII. from students unequal to a workman-like sketch of either monarch's life and character. No wonder some of the plans of the battle of Agincourt, drawn by females, resembled patterns of blouses.

Questions are often on the Philosophy of History, rather than History, and I have sometimes seen questions asked, the answer to which the ordinary text-books do not contain. The unreasonable multiplication of questions only makes matters worse. But of course the questions must not bear all the blame.

Asked for lessons to be learned from the pond. A female teacher wrote:—"The pond is specially interesting from the

happy hours spent there in the winter when the water was frozen!" Truth will out.

"Wolfe was a very able man, he was sent out by the honourable East India Co. to take Calcutta, this he did, then he died. He is reported as he led his men to the charge to have quoted those memorable lines from 'Graves Energy.' 'Up, Guards, and at 'em,' and to have said, 'Gentlemen, I would rather be the editor of these lines than take Calcutta.'"

"The blind King of Bohemia was led through the thickest of the fray, wielding his sword with terrific force, and cutting down every one he could see."

A second-year pupil teacher gave for the prime events in the reign of James II.: (1) Gunpowder Plot; (2) Cade's Rebellion; (3) Death and Character of the King.

Was it a Harrow boy who wrote: Character of Richard II., "Bold and audacious"? "I could have put lots more you know," he told his mother afterwards, "only I was too cute. They told us to be brief."

Asked about pre-gunpowder days, three female candidates wrote:—

"The guns used since the discovery of gunpowder are much better than those used before." "Bullets made with gunpowder were a great improvement on those used before." "Before the invention of gunpowder they had a very bad time—nothing to fight with but bows and arrows—and pistils."

"Early in the war Cromwell proceeded to train an austere band of followers under rigid discipline—to be henceforth known all the world over by the title which so well describes their characteristic qualities, viz.: Cromwell's Regicides."

Yet another bookish one:—"Among direct taxes we pay toll bars."

Standard V. used to have to answer history questions on paper. Here is one. "Richard II., Who fight in the crusades, and he could not take Jerusalem, so he went home and soon died, and he dont live now, dont Richard II."

"The battle of Bannockburn lasted from Edward I. to Henry IV., between Edward I. and Robert Bruce."

"The Wars of the Roses were very civil, and it was the worst war of any."

A pupil teacher wrote:—"In 1588 Elizabeth's only

surviving child, the duke of Gloucester, died, and the bill of settlement was accordingly passed."

Wesleyan pupil teacher :—Chief events in reign of William III. ? "William the third arrived in Dorsetshire and the following Sunday he heard his own friend preach from the cathedral pulpit."

Another pupil teacher :—"The queen joked, played and frolicked until nearly her last days, then her reason began to give way, and she died after a long and useful life."

In reply to which of the Richards would you rather have lived under ? A Standard V. boy wrote: "I would rather live under Richard the first. There were three brothers, Richard I., Richard II., and Richard III." (that is all he wrote).

A pupil teacher thus gives the history of her favourite king.

"Henry VII. was sordid, selfish, and distrustful. A skilful legislator and a refined politician. He had a great love for money which, when getting, he guarded with all the jealousy of a miser under his own lock and key."

A female pupil teacher wrote :—"Queen Elizabeth walked to the scaffold leaning on her fathers arm. The axe fell and all was over."

"Cæsar left England in 43, but returned to it in 410." Many put his first visit 50 years B.C., second visit 50 years A.D.

"The pale in Ireland was a disease of the potato, and the statute of Kilkenny was an act of Parliament to prevent its recurrence."

"Bretwalda—a title given by Athelstane to any one who had sailed five times round the world."

Wolsey once more :—"Henry at first feared he would not do. But he found out that he could drink, hunt, dress, tell stories, and swear as well as the best of his courtiers, so he made him Archbishop."

"Stephen Langton invented the steam engine."

"Henry VII., by parties and entertainments, soon made his treasury poor. He accused people for nothing at all, just to get money. Lord Wolsey was a man who helped him in this act, also Thomas Cromwell and Tom Moore."

In reply to the oral question, "What do you learn about Nelson ?" An eight-year old pleaded, "Please, sir, we haven't got to verbs."

Give a brief account of the Georges, "George I. comes I,

George II. comes II., George III. comes III., and George IV. comes IV."

Yet one more from Rugby (I think) to prove that ludicrous blunders are not the monoply of any class. "Which do you consider the greater general, Cæsar or Hannibal?" "If we consider who Cæsar and Hannibal were, the age in which they lived, and the kind of men they commanded, and then ask ourselves which we consider the greater general—we shall be obliged to reply in the affirmative." "On hearing of the French Revolution, MILTON exclaimed, 'Bravo, France.'" "*Mort main*—Many were kept in prison for years. Mort main means, Produce the body," wrote two pupil teachers.

Name the British possessions in Europe? "The British possessions in Europe are England, Gibraltar, Wales, and Germany."

Inspector to third-year pupil teacher:—"Why didn't you draw a map of the west coast of England?" "Couldn't do it, sir, never taught it." Village schoolmistress, who taught him (angrily):—"How *can* you say that. You can draw a map of England beautifully; why didn't you do it and rub the other half out."

A pupil teacher wrote:—"London—the largest city in the world—3¼ inhabitants."

Greenwich:—"An observitory for disabled seamen."

"Paris has many striking appearances. The emigrant beholds the mighty rocks and sea-shore traffic, he is struck at the wonderful and strange language of the inhabitants."

How do we know the earth moves? "Philisophers tell us"—is a relic of the days when written answers were demanded of Standard V.

What sea washes three Continents? "The Baltic, Asia, Africa, and America" is another, and—

"We know that the earth is round, because Navigators have sailed round the shadow on the moon."

"We know that the earth is round because it turns round on its axis."

The potteries:—"Empson, Dudley, and Warsaw."

In answer to an oral question of the ports of Britain. "Supposing you and I were going a voyage to New York, where should we start from?" Reply—"'ERE."

Upon what do the people of Cape Colony chiefly feed?

Standard V., in a parish conspicuous for missionary zeal, howls out, "Human Beeans" (beings).

The father of the Speaker in the House of Commons told me of a child who, when asked to write:—

"Here he did obedience show;
Oh, make me obedient too,"

wrote:—

"Here he did a pigeon show;
Oh, make me a pigeon too."

A good little girl once repeated to me:—

"Twinkle, twinkle, little star,
How I wonder-watch-you Ah!"

Every effort to split wonderwatchyou into its component parts having failed I said, "Turn round so as to remember to pause after 'wonder.'" Standing in front of her class she spun round with such agility that the wonderwatch remained still undivided. I suppose a new word had been coined in her mind:—"To contemplate with awe." I left her in peace. Even pupil teachers strangely violate the laws of emphasis. "I come to bury Cæsar, not Topraiseim," has often been repeated to me as if Antony's object were to bury not Cæsar, but someone else—possibly—in the reciter's mind—some Syrian general.

A Standard VI. boy's letter on his midsummer holidays shows him to have been easily pleased.

"I enjoyed myself very much when I had my midsummer holidays. I was weeding a field of potatoes the first week. Then I had a very interesting walk to the junction to see the trains, and I was counting the waggons of luggage trains, some of the luggage trains that runs on the London and North Western Railway have more than fifty-two waggons on one train. And I had a very interesting walk on the canal bank to the lock, and I was counting the barges. I then took my leaf and went home very much pleased."

After the perusal of a stirring description of the British army in which the words "mustered in scarlet hue" occurred, the teacher inquired the meaning of "mustered." "Please, miss," replied a model village girl, age fourteen, "they had had plasters on."

A few letters may throw light on lives other than our own. A Standard V. boy writes :—

"Dear Sir,—When I leave school I intended to be a shepherd and go along with till I am old enough to be a real shepherd to drive sheep, and if I can't be a shepherd I shall then be able enough for other work and then be of some use to my friends, and as I hope to be an man you will fully expect me to do some work, and as I hope that I may be able to do it, for perhaps I may happen of an accident and so then not be able to do it. And I hope I shall be well and you to."

A cheerful one from an Ipswich boy. Standard V.

"My mother is very ill and I hope she will get well again, she has been like it as three years, and she think she will be ill a bed again, and she cannot do the work, and the baby have been queer, and my two little brothers are taken very ill, and we hope they will get well again, and I was taken very ill a bed with the scarlet feaver, and I was very ill for a fortnight, and my mother was glad that I had gotten over it, and me brother have had absces on the neck, I remain yours truly."

This is from a girl aged about thirteen.

"Dear Sir,—Having had an invitation to an impromptu dance at the White Lion Hotel, I accepted and enjoyed myself immensely. After the first three or four dances I slipped out and ran home after my white gloves which I had forgotten to take with me. There were only about eight boys to about twenty girls so there was no lack of partners. The time stated in the program was till twelve, but I think it must have been fully one o'clock before I got to bed."

Standard V. :—

"Sir,—I now describe a short paragraph of what I should like to be. As my parents do not wish me to go to sea I should like to be a grocer. I tried to enter into a shop at Kessingland but the gentleman didn't care about having any one out of the village, because the customers didn't like to have people in the same village to know their business."

Write a letter from a servant in an untidy and unpunctual

house to her sister describing the drawbacks she has to contend with.

Standard VI. writes :—

"My Dear Sister,—I now take the pleasure of writing you these few lines hoping that you are quite well as it leaves me at present. I do not feel very comfortable in my new place as my master and mistress are so untidy and so late getting up in the mornings that I wish they were a hundred miles off. Dear sister if you were me you would wish the same. I do all my work nicely, and then I think about having a little pleasure, as most servants do, but, alas, there's no rest for me, as soon as I'm cleaned up a bit in comes my mistress and says to me, 'Why, Ann, have you done all the work,' I answer, 'Yes; Mam.' She say to me, 'Come, Ann, I can find you a job to do,' and she set me to brush my master's garden hat which he never use. Dear sister you may be sure I was angry enough; but I could not help myself, so I held my peace. I have such a lot of things to put up with that I sometimes think I must leave, and then I know that mother is hampered to make both ends meet, so I stay on but sometimes she spills the gravy all unto my nice carpet, and then tells me to get it up with a spoon. So now darling sister I shall tire you with my complaints, so I will conclude with my kindest love."

Standard V. writes :—

"Dear Mother,—When I leave school I shall be a carpenter, and then if I don't make a success I shall go in the navy, and go in foreign countries and look at the curious things. From your loving son."

A Standard V. girl writing on kindness to animals :—

"As I came to school this morning I saw my little kitten entangled in the hedge, I got it out and carried it home and then I noticed it had rent its ears, so I bathed them in cold water. Next I saw a rabbit in a trap which my brother had set, so I let it go and it scampered off seeming so pleased because it had got away. Now I think this was a kind action." (The brother's view of the case not stated.)

Another from Standard V. (Advocates of examinations please note.)

"My Dear Mother,—We are having our leaving examination this morning. When I leave school I think I shall be a dressmaker as I shall be at home with you and father. I hope you are all quite well as it leaves me the same. It makes me shake when I am examined. I think this is all this time, with love."

The following from a senior pupil teacher (female).

"Dear Friend,—Having nothing better to say now I beg to occupy a few moments of your valuable time in informing you how I pass my time away at home. My greatest of all pleasures is to wander down by the shady nook adjoining our habitation. Here one can view the wonders of creation in every way possible, by peeping through the leaves and admiring the opposite scenery. It makes me feel the thanks we owe our Heavenly Father who has provided all these gifts for our enjoyment. I often bring an interesting book with me and sit among the evergreens of this most cheerful solitary residence. At other times I love to wander out in the fields and watch the golden corn quite ripe to harvest. Here I look across the wide-spreading landscape and cannot help thinking of that great poet who so well describes all these grandeurs. Frequently in summer-time I visit the pebbly beach of our island and muse upon the power of that Great Being who causes the tides to flow backwards and forwards, keeping up an incessant roar, and for variety's sake throw pebbles across the expansive ocean. In winter it is delightful to visit the skating-rink and acquire robust health by the influence of the exhilarating air. I remain your esteemed friend. . . . ."

Standard V. boy :—

"Dear Edith,—Just a few lines to tell you what I should like to be when I am older. When I am about eighteen, I shall be a sailor on board a man-of-war to defend our country in the time of danger, which will suit me better than anything, because I am so fond of firing off guns at anything. So I'll close now, from your affectionate brother."

"My dear Sister,—I am going to tell you or rather write down what I should like to be. I want to be a soldier and be a Horse Soldier too and go to fight an enemy. I can imagine thousands of soldiers marching to battle, and I in the front ranks on a black horse with a sword in my hand and the drum playing as we marched away. I must stop now for I can say no more. From your affectionate Brother."

"Dear Mother,—I am being examined to-day. When I leave school I should like to be able to get a situation. If not able to obtain a situation I would like to go and be apprenticed to dressmaking. I would rather go to a situation. Because if I did not like to be at a situation I could leave, but if I were apprenticed to dressmaking I should have to stay for the time appointed. I am, your affectionate daughter."

This letter like that of the boy who wished to see "curious things" affords matter for serious reflection—being characteristic of our modern system.

A Suffolk village mother writes (1906) :—

To His Majesty's Inspector—Mr Swinburne, Esq.

Sir,—Will you kindly grant me a labour certificate for my boy age 13 the 10th day of last January as I am sorry to have to beg but I am in poor circumstances with 7 more below him to feed and find shoes for and he is not very strong we are always doctoring him and he have been sent to school ever since he was 3½ yrs old and I am sure he will be better from school as there insides are very poorly kept bread and butter is not enough for his age now and money will not allow more as there are 10 of us to 14 shillings a week 5 stone of flour and their clubs to pay so it is only starving there system. I am sorry if he did not pass as I have a little one ill with bronchutis for 9 weeks I have had to find new milk and am not strong myself as 3 youngest are from 3 yrs to 5 months so I think we need it and the next girl to him has a bad back we dont enjoy much only aflictions which pull us back very much indeed and I know of 2 places he can have 6d. a day which would help to his bread. I hope you will look through the case and grant him. The

schoolmaster told me last year that I should have him from the 15 of May till September last year but it was never granted if not I shall have to try for a medical certificate from the doctor. If I were not so poor would not mind how long he come to school I am Yours truly and Obedient servant."

The following paraphrase illustrates the inability of most Standard V. boys to grasp the meaning of a passage of anything like stiffness. "There was a great number present and those that were used to having beautiful eye glasses saw wonderful things; had not seen anything that will come up to that. To be in a building which without any difficulty to hold twice the number, 25000 people were sitting all the way round Her Majesty's throne in order. Round them in the middle and above them were sat everything that is of use or magnificent in several ways. At the top of them was an arch glittering very much, much better than the scenery in our most beautiful cathedrals. On both sides of them was the vista who seemed almost out of bound."

Lord Macaulay's well-known style will be recognized.

One of the drawbacks of being an examiner is that you are apt to be credited with omniscience. Whereas "to know anything one must NOT know many things." The late Mrs Lowther, mother of the Speaker, once unexpectedly asked me whether it was pronounced "eeder down" or "iider down," and everybody glancing at me as they would to observe the effect of a shot on a mark—I replied "eether or iither"—and it pleased them. But I generally run no risk and reply, "It is H.M.I.'s duty to ask not answer questions." In reply to the frequent question—"Are you a liberal?" I answer, "Madam, I am an Inspector of Schools."

CHAPTER XV

THE EAST SUFFOLK PRIZE SCHEME

From the earliest days of my inspection no taunt was more frequently thrown in my teeth than, "Fancy a man judging needlework," for it seemed not to occur to these critics that the best cooks are men, while male-tailor made garments are a luxury accessible to but few. I must plead guilty to mistaking, early in my inspection days, a very bad darn for a herring-bone—the stitches being so like the off shoots from the vertical column of that fish. Of course I covered my retreat by complaining of the bad light, and reduced the managers to respectful silence by making a note about the windows in my report. One of my colleagues said he had but one simple test—which very rarely failed him—If the buttons would anything like go into the button holes, he pronounced the sewing satisfactory.

On the other hand in pre-Scheme days I was informed that there were no garments for my inspection—because "the mistress had had a bad thumb." The work of cutting out garments for a class of sixty girls was often undertaken by the teacher, obviously to her and their disadvantage. The fine stitches were blinding; and a notion prevailed that the finer the stitch, the better the work, etc., etc.

It was to remedy these and other faults, especially the idea that education was too bookish, that the Prize Scheme, for the history of which I refer my readers to Appendix III. was started in 1881. At the first meeting of amateur judges each lady, holding up the garment of the school of which she was a manager, regretted that "whatever the merits of the other specimens might be, they could not excel the one in her hands." Consequently we were compelled to have London judges—and a more melancholy duty than that of being present at the judging has rarely fallen to my lot;

for each new judge spent most of her energy in condemnation of the methods of her predecessor—a state of things harrowing beyond description to the competitors.

For the first three years of the Scheme's existence, specimens were thrust before my eyes by the sewing mistresses, so to speak, embracing me from behind, with the simple question (the names being hidden) "which is the best?"—but I survived and lived to see many a beneficent result of that institution. As in all good work, *e.g.* the swing in golf, the body in skating, etc., the easiest and simplest method was proved to be the best; unnecessary strain was avoided; and furthermore the silent specimens were more eloquent than any code instructions. Inefficiency shrank away confounded—and full of resolve to improve. The idea sprang from the marvellous improvement in vegetables, etc., effected by a village show, in my father-in-law's parish of Launton, and it is strange that the squires and farmers who are so enthusiastic in bringing out the best in educating horses, dogs, and cows, etc., are so slow to appreciate the benefit derived from the education of men. Sadowa was called the victory of the elementary school master[1] and the schoolmaster's famous victory over the guardsman in the East Suffolk Prize Scheme military drill competition points the same way.

Of course we had our troubles; *e.g.* when Miss Lowther most kindly lent valuables to exhibit, the notices of "Do not touch" and "Please take one" from a neighbouring heap of circulars, got mixed. The valuables went, and the circulars remained; and when I borrowed a hideous table, on which to place some exhibits, a leading squire ignored all but the table itself and asked me, where he could procure one like it! And this, when I had carefully covered the table with calico, to hide its cheap ugliness.

A rural mistress, in reply to my remonstrance—"No poster up in the village," replied—

"Oh yes it is sir—it's on the dresser in my back kitchen" and a fair specimen of reasons for absence on the gala day was that of a mistress who "had to change a cheque." The clergy, did not attend the meetings well, though they always spoke warmly in praise of them. "It will be on the eve of my going for my much needed holiday," etc.

[1] "Modern Times," M'Dougall, p. 242.

At the Paris exhibition of 1900 specimens were chosen from the Scheme exhibits by a National Committee in England.

In no branch of instruction was the magic touch of that Scheme more in evidence than in the singing. Suffolk had long been abandoned as hopelessly unmusical; and instances like that of the master, who said, "Excuse me sir—but we don't take part-singing. The fact is we kind of Holloa together," could be multiplied. Another old-fashioned master spoke more of the truth than he meant when he said; "We teach it here on Howler's system." (He meant Hullah's.)

And yet I have heard the shabbiest and poorest of men in the streets of towns lightening their step or their task, as if their heads were in heaven, while their feet were on earth, by whistling or humming some such musical comedy ditties as "I've got a motter,—Always be merry and bright" —ditties doomed to murderous treatment, years and years after, in the provinces.

An experience of one of my colleagues will serve best as a specimen of the way they did things in the good old days, and this was in a county reputed musical—*a fortiori*, it was worse in Suffolk. The evangelical and deaf old squire is welcoming a fresh H.M.I.—whom we will call Mr B. succeeding Mr A.

"How do you do Mr B. I'm so glad it's not Mr A."

"Quite well, thanks——"

"Whaat?" The answer has to be repeated thrice—but that is a trifle compared with the sequel, when the unfortunate Mr B. has to repeat, with increasing loudness, answers which being rather polite than truthful, Mr B. would much rather have been saved the pain of saying even once.

"Mr A. was a bit of a radical—are *you?*—are *you?*"

Mr B.—"Not *much.*"

Squire—"Whaat?" (answer repeated thrice). As it happens Mr B. *was* a bit that way.

Squire—"I'm glad. You and I'll get onnn—"

The same process repeated with "Ritualist."

Squire—"Do *you* believe in baptismal regeneration—and that sort of thing? I don't call it gospel. Mr A. did."

Mr B.—"Well-er—I don't quite—er."

Squire—"Whaat" shouting as before.

Perspiration on Mr B.'s brow—how long is his politeness to go on sacrificing his principle ? It is the repetition that makes it so painful. He has to shout out his own perfidy, over and over again !

Squire—" I see—you and I'll get onnn. Are you fond of singing ? "

Mr B. (who being very musical, is beginning to feel for his watch) " yeees " (repeated as before).

Squire—" Would you like to hear something sung by the children. It is BEEUUUTIFOOL—beeutifool ! "

The children, stiff as trussed fowls, in a line along the wall and desperately resisting the temptation to wave their bodies from side to side, after some tedious delay break forth into :

" Yer must not work on Sundee—
Becorz it is a sin—
But you may work on Mondee—
Tuesdee—Wednesdee—Thursdee—Fridee—
Till Sundee come agin
Till Sundee come agin."

The harshness, tune and jingle can only be orally rendered. It is, something like emptying gravel carts.

Squire—" Isn't it *beeeutifull*—Whaat ? " It's no use—Mr B. has to shriek " yees " again and again—if it's only to get away ! " That hymn Mr B.—brought a *whole familee* to a sense of their spiritual shortcomings—that hymn, sir, was instrumental, under Providential guidance, in the salvation of a *whole Familee !* . . ."

This was the parting shot !

Sir Brampton Gurdon used to say that every human being should be taught to walk in the water as well as on land ; and this all the more in places, like East Suffolk, where many of the inhabitants may be described as amphibious. That the scheme has worked wonders for swimming is undeniable and the newspaper cuttings before me as I write, prove how unnecessary are the annual human sacrifices to the Demon Apathy. " The river will have its toll of life " begins one of these extracts ; and in another (1905) the Coroner's chief complaint is not they could not swim ; but that there was no line on the life-buoy !

Ignorance dies hard, counterfeiting knowledge to the last, and "there is not one in ten of the Lowestoft fishermen, who can swim," said a Lowestoft official in 1906.[1]

"Swimming only prolongs the agony" is the fallacy it hugs in this instance.

And what about the drowning of about 100 in the harbour at Hamburg, "while the band was playing on deck—amid dancing, singing and chatter?" or that awful case in the Waveney where the helpless father saw his son drown, a few yards off, in still water.

But as I write the Lowestoft boys are passing my window with towels under their arms—and thanks to the Scheme, the battle is won. At one of those soul-stirring annual competitions at the Kirkley baths, whose proprietor has been so generous a friend of the Scheme, I sat next to a Lowestoft nonconformist who, to console himself for the triumphs of places like Wangford or Wickham Market with their brooks rather than rivers, whispered to me—

"You see we have no water at Lowestoft"!

Even an ear accustomed, as one whose duty it is to recommend grants must be, to similar excuses, was staggered. I remember a Wesleyan School in the North, years ago, where I complained of a lack of books, "Well, you see only last week we found our supplies so overwhelming, we simply had to choose between reducing the accommodation or lightening the ship," was the reply.

In connection with the scheme,[2] Wangford has proved

[1] *East Anglian Daily Times*, 12th August 1911:—

"Sir,—Five of the inquests which I have held this week have been upon the bodies of persons—adults and children—accidentally drowned. In every case the deceased had no knowledge whatever of swimming. In every case (except perhaps one), if the deceased had had even an elementary knowledge, death would, in all probability, not have ensued. I hold many inquests upon the bodies of drowned persons. The evidence almost invariably shows that the deceased was unable to swim. I cannot but think that all school children (whether attending elementary or secondary schools) should be taught to swim. There are few exercises which are at once so healthful, pleasant, and, at times, so vitally useful.—I am, etc.,

A. F. Vulliamy,
Coroner for Suffolk."

"Ipswich, *August* 11, 1911."

[2] A touching instance of the wide-spread sense of the need of instruction in swimming was furnished by the stone-breaker on the road

once more that despised villages may lead the world. Anyhow it led a county, when it sent up to London that illustrated history book, destined to occupy a distinguished place in the Imperial Exhibition—and still more when its marvellous energy in teaching the children to swim overcame obstacles that seemed to be insurmountable. If I may be excused a personal digression, I have swimming in my blood—and on one occasion, when calling on the poet and finding him out, in course of a chat on that subject with his secretary, I communicated the fact that I myself held the vellum for saving life. A certain expression of incredulity spreading over his face—a penalty which the truthful often have to pay for the lies of the untruthful—I "pulled up sharp," so to speak. A day or two after, at the end of a kind letter from him to express the regret of the poet at having missed me—I read the secretary's name—

It was the very same which was on my vellum.

"Are you," I inquired in my next letter, "any relation of" etc. A letter full of regrets, gratitude and ample apologies from him was the result. It was his own brother—but as the brother was dead, and the rescue took place so many years ago—it had slipped, etc., etc. He will not doubt my word again.

When I conducted a reading party at Clovelly, which gave me the idea for "Picture Logic,"—subsequently developed at Sompting Rectory—I narrowly escaped drowning, having gone out by myself to bathe in a boat—because the seamen refused to venture out of the harbour in the rough sea. I forgot that the wind had more power on the high sides of the empty boat than on a swimmer, and I had an awful struggle to overtake it and climb in. It was while there that that most charming of men, Canon Rawnsley, shared a smack with us, and two seamen, when a storm kept us under the shelter of Lundy Isle all night.

I had another narrow escape when swimming round the island at Tenby—for the woman told me I must keep close to the shore to avoid the current; but when I had doubled the point, I found that the rocks which were being blasted

near Wangford, who sent a message to the spirited and cheery schoolmaster of the school there. "Please to accept 6d. towards the expenses from me, Sir; I lost my two sons at sea."

above were falling thickly into the water, where the workmen could not see me.

I also swam across the Menai straits at night-fall—and (to my shame, though it helps me to sympathise with youth's folly) played a trick on a Brighton boatman, who pestered me to bathe from his boat.

After simulating a nervous dread of plunging into deep water for fear I should never come up again—until even his iron nerve was affected; I dived down deep, and out of his sight, turned, swam under the boat, and came up twenty yards the other side—to be the amused spectator of his back, while with wild struggles he strove to locate me. . . .

But he failed to appreciate the joke—and we had a very melancholy row home.

But to resume—self being a seductive subject.

Should the poor be debarred from books? Are they not the class that need them most? The privileged few who have access to the best minds in the flesh may dispense with reading; but the vast majority cannot enjoy such access. People who cannot get fresh meat or fruit must be content with that preserved in tins, and books may fairly be called "tinned mind."

The East Suffolk Teachers' Circulating Library, started by the Scheme, is or was unique. But, like all good things, it was difficult to start. Here are five, selected from many examples—

1. *H.M.I.*—"How did you like your book?"

Teacher—"The teachers each side of me like theirs, and I shall mine."

H.M.I.—"How *did* you?"

Teacher—"Never looked beyond the title-page, as it was on some very dry subject—teaching, I think."

2. "Travels in Africa." She is charmed, delighted, etc. "Here's a *second volume.*"

Too much for her self-control—"What! two of 'em?" in a voice of dismay.

3. The books will no doubt be instructive—to assistants and pupil teachers.

4. I think you are under a misapprehension. Are you aware you are speaking to the holder of a first-class teacher's certificate?

5. Mine was a very dry one—"Fire-fountains."

Unfortunately all libraries are apt to be abused—the husks chosen and the nourishment rejected, for, strangely enough, old and young would rather read falsehood about what they ought not to know, than truth about what they ought to know.

I remember once at a village school, after I had spoken on Books, a lad asked me to visit a neighbouring cottage where I found a nonagenarian peasant, whose wife told me, "She did not know what he would do with himself but for reading."

"The Bible"—she went on—"that's first."

"Certainly," was my pleased rejoinder; "and close to it come them murders in the paper. He *dew* love them." I moved toward the door—somewhat disconcerted. She followed me to the gate.

"You don't fare to think," she whispered, in a tone of deepest anxiety, having evidently misread my expression, "them murders is likely to come to an end. I don't know what he *would*. . . ."

"Oh, no, there is no cause for alarm on *that* score. Good-night," I replied.

But even that is better than the Cambridgeshire octogenarian cottage couple, to whom the late Rector of Melton told me he paid a visit, at the request of a friend, to see what true happiness was.

"And how do you pass your time?" inquired the Rector.

"Well, I don' no; 'ere we sits and we looks and looks—till we hates the werry sight of one another."

But too much cannot yet be expected; until we have advanced further from recent days of school libraries—containing gifts of (for example) the first Encyclopedia (1837), Logarithms, and a well-thumbed description of demi-monde life, which would bring a blush to the cheek of even a member of the demi-monde.

To return to the Scheme. The late Duke of Devonshire's letter may be interesting.

"10*th July* 1901.

"Dear Mr Swinburne,—In confirmation of my telegram of to-day, I write to say that the Duke fears he must ask you to omit the "Ode of Welcome" from the programme, and also to say that he strongly objects to the suggestion that his carriage should be dragged up from the station.

"I should think you ought to have no difficulty in obtaining

horses who do not mind the noise of the bands, etc., but, if there is any difficulty about the matter, the Duke says he does not see why he and Lady Stradbroke should not walk up to the Exhibition as the distance is so short. But I have no doubt you will find it quite easy to arrange for horses.—
Yours truly, RIVERSDALE WALROND."

Sir Joshua Fitch, who so warmly praised the Scheme, is the author of the "Manual on Teaching" still recommended by the Board of Education. Quite recently the Scheme was described, by another very high official, as Mr Swinburne's "*admirable Educational Gymkhana.*"

For twenty-nine years—with success after success, each year surpassing its predecessor—the Scheme, having emerged from initial clouds of jealousy, shone on Suffolk, with a blameless beneficence that turned everything it touched into gold, and capable of adapting itself with perfect elasticity to all the latest developments. Its certificates may be found in countless cottages in East Suffolk to this day. But clouds of jealousy were to darken its orbit once more.

Faultless, I said, it was, but it had one fault. It was not the L.E.A.'s child, while the L.E.A. itself was Whitehall's child; and when that infant institution made mistakes its fond dam would (like a mother in a railway train) plead its tender years to irate fellow-passengers. The L.E.A.'s original attitude towards the Scheme was foreshadowed by its late chairman's remark to a schoolmistress who had pointed out my photo, as president of the Scheme, hung up in a school.

"Who's that?" he asked.

"Mr Swinburne, sir."

"And who was that other I saw in the infants' room?"

"Mr Swinburne, sir."

The reverend gentleman then made use of a naughty word, which the mistress told me she feared must have been overheard by the children. But no man ever meant better or worked harder than he did.

Moreover, the Scheme had other faults, for which (like Socrates) it suffered. It brought no pecuniary gain to anyone. It had nothing to do with the army, or navy, or pheasants, etc. Its benefit to the Church and Chapel-choirs, being indirect, escaped notice.

I wish I had space to repeat what Dr Crowfoot, Alderman of the County Council, one of the most charming and cultured of men, said about the Scheme. But, alas! the great maternal Whitehall listens fondly to her own little offspring the L.E.A.; —and the L.E.A. have, in turn, their own little offspring to cherish, though it has yet to be shown whether rural L.E.A.'s are educationists at heart.[1]

Furthermore, the scores of times new clergy and others have visited the Scheme Exhibitions for a first time and left, protesting solemnly they would never miss another meeting, and in a little year we saw their faces no more.

But "it only helped a few" (an objection to which, by the way, all titles, prizes, and the like are open). Helped a few! As each head-teacher, assistant, and child—and none were keener supporters than the child—gazed at the specimens of drill, singing, writing, drawing, needlework, cookery, vegetables, woodwork, etc., their ideas were enlarged, their standard raised, and, above all, they realised the unspeakably blessed truth, that the best work is ever simple, and half the fussy efforts to teach the subject are ignorant waste of time and energy. The voice of fault-finding ever grates on the ear—and souls are drawn, not driven to Heaven—the silent witness of the admirable exhibits was like a still small voice that does not grate on the ear.

Of course the usual outcry was raised. "Exhibitions foster forcing, special preparation, extra time, etc." These are but the subterfuges of jealous inferiority, and they are made of the very stuff that killed the excellent merit grant of old and killed the heads of the law and the Church in Wat Tyler's time, and would now kill the House of Lords. Managers could easily check any abuses of exhibition; what blessing cannot be abused?

The Ipswich Teachers were half prevailed on to enroll

[1] The shock it was to me when I first discovered that Rural School Boards, set up to champion Education, were really stabbing it in the back—"Et tu, School Board!" But Bishop Welldon's use of the word bureaucracy in connection with the Board of Education, and Mr Francis Cox's "whole-hearted sincerity—much exceeding that of a mere salaried official"—suggest uncomfortable reflections as to whether the Rural Board and the L.E.A. are the only offenders in this direction. The shock of my green age is lost in the greater shocks of my maturity.

themselves, but "country teachers," they said, "did not so often meet as town ones, and if they competed they could not meet one another." Of course, if the competition were compulsory, I agree with them, but they would not even exhibit. But what can I say when even the learned professions would agree with them. I can only take refuge in Carlisle's well-known dictum about nine out of ten ordinary people. But worst fault of all, the Scheme was loved of the old Pharaoh; and there came a new Pharaoh, who (if a beetle that crawls at the base of a towering pyramid, may presume to know anything about the summit), though a born leader of men, and one who never spares himself, would seem in his devotion to Secondary Education, and in the unwieldly bulk of his colossal work (Elementary and Secondary Education, combined), to occupy the position of the man who could be "so happy with either, were t'other dear charmer away." After all, the beetle's head is nearer the ground, and so, farther from the clouds; and Siam is scarcely a model training school.

Anyhow, the leading article in the leading East Anglian newspaper agrees with the beetle (March 5, 1905):—"So far back as 1882, we were able to speak of the Prize Scheme, as 'an inestimable boon to the county,' and since then its sphere of usefulness has been greatly developed. Mr Swinburne's foundation has been quoted with approval by the leading organs of the English Press, and it has enjoyed the kindly patronage of Her Royal Highness the Princess Christian, as well as of the leading lights in the educational world," and that newspaper has had so little in the way of advertisement, etc. from us, that its consistent praise of the scheme from the beginning, proves it to be a true friend of the people for their own sake. After its denunciation of Red Tape, one pictures the Scheme and its two children, the Library and Swimming, as a Laocoon in those deadly folds. And it does seem strange if the Education Authority in a County becomes the means of stamping out an admittedly excellent educational institution.

Had it not been for the mistaken idea that it was I, and not the board of Education, who was responsible for the condemnation of things formerly approved, I believe the clergy would have rebelled in my behalf. That vicious practice of

(so to speak) unrecommending things previously recommended, a practice to which Inspectors, who are unfamiliar with the condition of things as things used to be, are liable, reminds one of the disastrous spectacle of a sow devouring her own offspring, or, which practically amounts to the same, sitting on them. I keep pigs.

The best name I ever saw was the one I saw to-day on a Pakefield fisherman's boat, "My own"—and the Scheme was my own. "A poor thing, my Lord," said a clergyman introducing his wife to the bishop, "but My own," and the wife added, as the Scheme might say, if it could speak :—

"A poorer thing but my owner"; and I certainly have been a "poorer thing" since those happy days of the children's carnival; while I am proud to think that managers, teachers, and children, miss, almost as much as the bereaved founder, and, for twenty-five years president, those festivals—first in tabernacles in Saxmundham and then in the splendid accommodation at Ipswich.[1]

[1] Two tributes to the Scheme, one from London, the other from Chicago, prove that the great world may owe something even to its little corners.

Fred. Mobbs, a Lowestoft boy, and Victor Larke, a Beccles boy, both won distinctions at the Scheme Competitions—one for drawing, the other for swimming. The *Daily Mail*, October 16th, '05, tells how the former subsequently at the age of fifteen submitted his pencil sketch to the late Sir Henry Irving, and how that kind-hearted actor signed the portrait of himself (with many encouraging expressions of interest then as well as previously) a quarter of an hour before his real death, so tragically following close upon his imitation death in "Thomas à Becket."

The Chicago Tribune, August 31st, '05: "Larke swam with the young woman a quarter of a mile through heavy breakers. . . . She was exhausted. . . . The rescue was witnessed by many guests of the hotel, and the young man received numerous flowers, and messages of praise and congratulation. Larke, who is eighteen years old, won a medal for swimming in Suffolk, England, in 1898."

CHAPTER XVI

EAST SUFFOLK TEACHERS

How often have I enjoyed the lessons given by East Suffolk teachers, and how much they have taught me. The lectures formerly heard have disappeared from these parts, and one may, on every side, watch the process of drawing out (*i.e.* educating) the mental faculties of the children, with the wonder which the sight of a past master of such an art as fly-fishing, for example, elicits.

A yet better illustration of true pedagogy is furnished by the well-known picture of the Highland lassie crossing a stream, and "leading the feet," seems at all events to sound like a better interpretation of the Greek word than "leading the child." She does not lift or carry the bairn who follows her, but, on the other hand, she does not fail to turn and ever reassure and guide, as the trembling little feet advance from slippery stone to slippery stone—water and self-help deepening side by side.

The East Suffolk teachers of the present day will hold their own against any body of teachers in the world; and their admirable skill in handling classes is partly accountable for the reluctance of the clergy to essay the same art—the very modesty which springs from true culture thus tending to deprive the country of the beneficent influences of the latter. But the two spheres are absolutely distinct; and there is plenty of room for both kinds of teaching, which should go hand in hand, as I have so often found in the best schools.

I am sure the teachers of East Suffolk will not misunderstand the spirit in which, in order to show the vast improvement that has been effected, I call attention to a few specimens of old-fashioned instruction.

The North Country and the East Anglian types are as likely

to blend as oil and water. A Scotch head set over a South Country subordinate generally comes to grief; and the stupefaction of modern Suffolk children, suddenly subjected to the fresh importation of a noisy Yorkshireman of doubtful antecedents but cheap, like the following, is an experience worth recording.

Hidden behind the blackboard I took notes, as, like the ghost in Hamlet, I had my times to appear, and in the religious instruction I was only dimly visible.

Golf is often taught by pictures, showing how not to do it, and schoolmasters must not think me didactic. If I am, they are my didaskeloi. All I know they have taught me. I give them but their own.

The parson who makes a rainless inspection day a subject of prayer, and lays his school " at the foot of the throne of Grace," and carefully leaves it there, shunning the priceless, though anything but showy, duty of teaching the children himself—a duty as hotly fought for on platforms as it is too often shirked in practice—is accountable for some strange religious instruction.

For the schoolmaster, or mistress, resembles the mind in being his " own place " and able to make a Heaven of Hell——a Hell of Heaven.

Imagine the idea presented to the children in a " game " county by the Yorkshireman who, in a physical geography lesson, told them: " This Globe is encircled in hair. The hair *will* roon out. Did you ever sit on a hair cushion? The hair rooshes in and forces the water down."

Their only idea of a " hair cushion " was a hare's form.

I used to find some of the importations from other counties anything but improvements on our Suffolk teachers.

Here is another by that Yorkshireman, some twenty years ago :—

" Now!!" (all jump); " another parrrable—BE'OLD a sower went forth to sow "—" *But* oooooo " (to rhyme with " who ") " HARR the sowers? "

Dead silence—and then, after one or two faint though, reasonable attempts—stifled promptly—

" HI HAM."

" If I give you a lesson on harithmatic, or spellin', and this gentleman comes to reap the 'ARVEST. Where is it?

What comes of the seed ? Why, it's fallen on the 'ARD road side—*and hi gets the blame!*"

"Now!" (all jump). "What's a MYRRRRAKLE—No . . . No . . . No. Why, HI'll tell yer—if a 'orse took flight, it's a myrrakle if it stopped." Audible sigh of relief from whitefaced class, who would have gone on guessing for hours, but for his merciful eagerness to be funny.

Accustomed as they were to "stiff uns" this broke the record :—

"Why didn't they believe 'IM without MYRAKLES ? HI'll tell yer. 'Cos 'E was born so low. O the times that you've 'ad that text drilled into yer. YAH ! Forgotten it again—the foxes AVOLES. Fill them hoop to the brim. What does a coop do when filled hoop to the brim ? HI'll tell yer. Roon over." Many sensible answers had been snubbed—for his own insensate one, of course. It need not run over, and thus I plainly read in the children's eyes. "When's a man the best JOOGG" (judge) ? "When he's had plenty—Bear it to the Goovernor—What hever thy 'and findeth, etc."

But the recapitulation is worse—the children leaping up like Jack-in-the-boxes on the spring of his questions and flopping down again limp on their seats.

He—"What is a parable ?" They—"An earthly story with a heavenly meaning."

He—"Is it ? Simple non-sense, and what could be expected with that hignorant predecessor of mine. HI'll tell yer—what it is. A hordinary narrative with a hextra-hordinary signification" (sensation of awe which soothes him for a moment).

"If I were to tell you about a cotton mill—or a mine—what would you know about it ? . . . you—you . . . No —no—why—HI'll tell yer—NUTHIN ! "

"So with our Lord" (here he softens into a whining imitation of the vicar—and is soothed with the sweet semblance of preaching) "when he was a talkin' about 'EVAN."

"Now, the PARRable of the VEENyard" (all jump at VEEN —it cuts even the air).

"There are two sorts of people—What are they ? "

"No . . . No . . . No . . . GOOD and BAD."

"Now ! " (start). "What is more dreadful than keepin'

PIGS." (Dismay—to keep pigs is with them as to be knighted with us). . . .

"Why lookin' arter 'em of course. . . . How stoopid you are. You've only got to remember—FUST 'e began to *think*—then to *talk*—then to HACT. And I perish with . . . 'UNGER."

"With what?" "'UNGER." "With what?" "'UNGERRRRRRR."

The simultaneous whine is long-drawn to appease his growing anger—as savages propitiate evil spirits. "The YUNGER is never supposed to have so much sense as the? . . . no—no—HOLDER. . . ."

He—"What is riotous living?" They—"Drink." He—wincing—"Non—sense—"

"Began to think" (solemnly). "When you—come—to—difficult—words—to spell—what are you to do . . . THINK!"

"Now suppose there was one raised from the dead in this village—what would they do?" "*Wonder?*" "Nooo" (after many reasonable answers crushed). He—"*Talk*. . . ."

(To me.) "Yes—sir—you'd like to see a written answer?—certainly!" (writes on blackboard) (1) Prod. SON—(2) Rich M. and L. like algebraic "forms," for them to choose between. "No, Tom, you've 'ad Prod. so often—and you've 'art disease—you take the rich man." As I watch, he grows more and more excited. "Now mind the spellin'. . . . To help yer, I'll write one word—POTION—on blackboard." He meant portion! He cannot resist plunging in again; and looking over a girl's slate from behind her—yells—"Prodi—Prodi—yes—that's right—mean to say you can't spell GAL. O' course you're all muddellin' it—do just remember—FUST he began to think—then to—then to talk—then—to HACT—yer can't get wrong then."

Ceaseless roar ("I know you'll disgrace me, and copy") in the midst of which, suddenly—with intense relief—"Roob it all out—it's turned XII. and she 'ASN'T begun the 'YMN"—and he flings the door open with a glance of triumph at my disappointment at not having seen those slates. His wife begins shrilling at the top of her broken voice—that never was a voice—from the teacher's room—"PEACE—perfect peace—in this dark world of . . ." etc. The children shriek almost as shrilly, while the master's roarings and darts and

pouncings in the main room complete an indescribable scene of harshness and confusion.

Yet one more by the same, also heard from a hide behind the blackboard before the secular instruction began.

Master—"Mo-SAYS—Mo-says—we 'ear a lot about 'im, don't we ?"

"Yisssss" (under their breath with awe).

"Mo-says was a great man in 'is day, wasn't 'e ?"

"Yissss."

May I be forgiven if I was fanciful but I could have sworn I detected a note of something like disappointment and jealousy in the master's next question.

"Yea—I suppose he was. Would he have been in our day ?"

Bewilderment in the faces of the class—turned inquiringly from one to another for the clue—which did the master want —yes or no ?

Question repeated in a sterner tone.

Still silence—with rising fears—they are Suffolk children.

"In *hour* day—with the *schoolmaster* abroad—with ME—Mr— 'ere."

No more hesitation.

"Noooooo."

Habits cannot be shaken off in a day. I once met a schoolmaster in Lancashire whose extraordinary success (he drew about £500 a year) had left its mark upon him. He was so accustomed to say—SHH—that he could not refrain from using the word even in ordinary conversation, and as far as I can remember, the following is a reproduction of his greeting to me when I inspected the school.

"Good morning, sir, I always feel so pleased to say to you —SHHH—no—no—what a comfort it is to me that you are my inspector, and what a privilege it is to be able to say unreservedly to you—SHH—I mean—how grateful I am to you."

"You were going to say—SHHH—dear me ! when I interrupted you by telling you my wife advised me when next you spoke to me to say—SHH—ahem ! how deeply grateful we both are to you. We never can sufficiently repeat this—SHH—no—no—to you, sir, indeed we cannot," and so on.

Some of the rural teachers I found thirty years ago, though

they generally bore out Goldsmith's inimitable description, occasionally marred their many good points by conceit similar to the Yorkshireman's.

Mr —— of Snoreham Magna—nicknamed "Flums" from his frequent use of the order "Feet together, fold arms," had a very happy time of it.

Now Whitehall might fulminate in vain about the needful classrooms for Snoreham, but Snoreham slept peacefully on; but what *did* stir Snoreham Magna to its very depth was, what they were doing at the neighbouring village, Snoreham Parva. If Snoreham Parva had a classroom, Snoreham Magna would go through fire and water to have one too. Now Flums was a sort of Upas tree deeply rooted in what he called the brainlessness of the Snoreham Magna children. The vicar's wife annually assured me that partly from intermarriage, partly from innate stupidity, the Snoreham Magna children were practically imbeciles. She had it on the schoolmaster's own authority; and all the while I was haunted with a presentiment that the children were being sacrificed. But Molochs are not easily torn from their pedestals; and I have the less hesitation in recording this experience, as I have proved again and again that keen as the National Union of Teachers is to safeguard the best interests of those whom it represents, it is ever and most wisely to the fore in condemnation of anything like pretentious inefficiency, and the same may be said of those who have for so many years supported me in my efforts for the public good—my true friends—the teachers of East Suffolk.

At that time the vicar's wife was equally positive that the Board of Education had only one object in view—to destroy voluntary schools—and on my solemnly assuring her that this was the very opposite of the truth, expressed her profound regret that she must believe the assertion of many rather than the assertion of one, and that one an inspector; and the vicar partly from chivalrous support of his schoolmaster—for which no one respected him more than I did—half-agreed with his better half. For years I had to endure such instruction as "What can you tell me about the population of India?"

Various creditable answers were suppressed by a stentorian

" Nonsense—Flums " ; for they were not the answer he had in his mind—which proved to be—" The population of India includes three Great Snoreham boys—trained at this school —doing splendidly."

Or—" Bristol Channel "—(contemptuously) : " Why Bristol ? Why not Great Snoreham Channel ? "

Or—" If you were in the planet of Jupiter what place would first arrest your attention, if you pointed your glass to England ? "

Again several passable answers are snubbed for his own, which is—" Great Snoreham "—and (will it be believed ?) the most conspicuous figure in Great Snoreham if the glass was strong enough would be ?

" The doctor."

" No."

" The rector."

" No "—folding his own arms this time, and drawing himself to his full height—" Myself."

Relief came at last. The workhouse children had been incorporated in the school, and the rector wrote to me telling me that his schoolmaster was grievously disquieted by the conviction that " that inspector " would now indulge his well-known animus by laying their inefficiency at his—the schoolmaster's—innocent door. Thereupon I promised in writing that the attainments of these immigrants should not be taken into account, and, to make a long story short, as I fully expected, these very attainments were the redeeming feature of the examination.

Should I act on my promise, or, in the best interests of the school, write again to be excused from it ? I wrote. The eyes of the managers were at length opened, and the rector's subsequent action might fairly be compared to that of Aaron when he stopped the plague—idiotcy this time. Nothing more was heard about imbecility under the schoolmaster's successor during whose tenure of office the Great Snoreham children have won prize after prize in the county competitions, the school being now, as I write, one of the best schools in Suffolk, if not in England.

Yet two more instances of a conceit now happily extinct.

A master leaving in his speech in return for a testimonial

said, "It is a sad moment, and what I feel most deeply is where they can find a man to take my place."

A pupil-teacher once wrote—"I have taken cursory glances and sketches of the works of Charles Dickens, and I find . . . that apart from their being a pleasant change from more substantial work, there is nothing to be gained or learned from them."

The times when to demand written notes was regarded as unreasonable have happily passed away.

Here is a lesson on botany given before me in the good old days by a certificated assistant in a town girls' school. It will soon be seen how carefully the lesson had been prepared—and with what fatal results. The illustration too consisted of one split bean in the teacher's hand under the shadow of a gas-lit afternoon; and as the hand was never still, one might presume she wanted them *not* to see it.

"You remember the two gentlemen—(managers of this British and Foreign Bible Society School) who spoke so nicely about botany? The Rev. —— who was it?"

"No—no—you silly girl, not Hilum (pronounced like Oilem). *That* was in the plant."

Then, selecting one of the keenest of the bright eyes, parted lips and outstretched hands—"You then."

Now or never, thinks the girl. "Please Miss, Plumule and Radical."

"Nonsense, you stupid creatures! . . . (My reader, have you ever seen the tenderest of loyal expressions sinking under icy rebuff from the teacher they love—

> "Purpureus veluti quum flos succisus aratro
> Languescit moriens. . . .")

"Come along, then, never mind that—you remember we said we had two hard words—one meaning—'straight up' and the other—'going out sideways'" (perpendicular and horizontal were the sesquipidalia verba she had to some extent spared them, and she little knew the good mark I gave her for so much consideration, the best point in her lesson).

"You remember?" Past failure melts in the delight of youthful ardour—it must be right this time. "Please Miss, Missss——"

"Well Dorothy, dear?"

" Plumule and Radical."

" Sit down, you naughty child "—with concentrated asperity, and a yet sadder sinking in the joy of the class—as the coils of that cram-snake of her own creation wound faster around the teacher's devoted form under the eyes of her inspector, who only allowed her to continue—mercifully—as a doctor continues a wholesome operation.

Fresh start—bygones forgotten—" Now my dear children " —and no one forgives quicker and bears less malice than children, especially in groups—" you surely remember the two long words when we spoke of the distinction drawn between the one-leaved and the two-leaved plants—Oh, such difficult words, weren't they, dears ? "

" Yiss marm "—with the loving gratitude sympathy so quickly evokes from childhood. Needless to say " dicotyledon, etc.," were what she was driving at.

There was a tremor of excitement as the chances narrowed —it must be right this time.

" Well ? "—Plumule—and—Radical—rolls out again like a wave—only to die away in a moan of disappointment under their teacher's almost tearful—" How can you be so stupid, you silly girls ? "

At last, it was right—and only to see the face of the girl who lead the chorus and who had persevered to the end through bitter snubbing—victim so often, victor at last, and covered with glory !

As to the teacher she looked ten years older at the end of that lesson. She will not cram them again.

May I here add that some head teachers—exceptions of course—seem to think that a certain degradation attaches to the idea that the head teacher should be called on for a lesson. Surely he or she should gladly embrace the opportunity.

And yet I remember the relief of managers and teachers when one of those supplementary teachers was allowed to be substituted for a pupil-teacher to teach Standard IV. You see, said they, " We have not got to teach her," for they rightly held that as she knew nothing they could build nothing on nothing. Still I think Mr Sharpe's definition—" Animated broomsticks " was harsh and unjust. Some of the old-article 68ers were admirable for young children. But if you would view the article 68er aright you must view her by the pale

object lesson's light—a painful spectacle—dim thought struggling through dimmer expression. Of course, any specimen I may quote is chiefly useful as a reductio ad absurdum.

One of them in a lesson on word-building, grouped under one category—restless, empress, harness, etc.

Another I asked—" Do you read ? "

" Oh, no, sir, I *never* study."

Having been brought up for domestic service where the idea of skulking in corners with a novel was naturally condemned, she meant to say that she occupied her leisure with useful housework.

Another, in reply to my question, said that her managers were all three gentlemen, and that her head teacher was a gentlemen—that is to say—not a lady.

Was this the meaning of the " gentleman " often set down in Form IX. by certain school managers who were asked to give their " names and styles."

Here is a lesson by an article 68er, a creature who resembled nature in being difficult to observe, but I managed to hide somewhere near her. She is crimson-bloused and seems anxious to show off to her ring of boys who are within easy striking distance—an essential preliminary. She has one large map, no pointer. It is a first lesson. " What are these ? " she begins, her finger-point covering a county.

Teacher.—" Cheviot Hills."

Class.—(Ecclesiastical chant) " CheviotILLS, Cheviottills "—as the " suckers " roll in their mouths.

Teacher.—" These ? Cumbrian Mountains."

Class.—" Cumbering - mountains — Come - bring - moun - tains. . . ."

Teacher.—" Pennine Chain."

Class.—" Pennine-Chain—Peniron chain. . . ."

Teacher.—" These are the longest."

Class.—" These-are-the-longest—Theseare the long guess."

Teacher.—" Cambrian Group."

Class.—" Cambrian Group—Cam-bring-groop."

Teacher.—" Cam-not-Cum."

Class.—" Cam-not Cum—Cam not cum."

Teacher.—" And these are *not* mountains, *nor* hills, *nor* chains, but—Devonian Range."

Class—" DE-WONYAN Range—De-wonnianarrange—"

Teacher—" And now East Anglian heights—*not* mountains, *nor* chains, nor *range*, but *heights*—heights not hills."

Class—" Hitesnotills—Hitesnot-ills." and so on. No further information on any of the points. The master told me how delighted he was that I now knew what he already knew. Two nights before he had almost forced her to study a book of notes, and when his wife also pressed the book on her she demurred, but eventually consented, adding cheerfully—" Thank you, kindly, three minutes is all I shall want." And she was made of the right stuff—teeming with many good points, especially heart—and far better for infants than clever people often are—but scarcely suitable for Standard III. But this kind walk not with Plato in the eve—but with someone else in whose case they *do* mean " to go on with it."

Here is a note I received :—

" To MR SWINBURNE.

" SIR,—The schoolmaster sent me to you this morning to ask you a favour-to—article me 68."

Here are some " full notes." A few vague remarks on method, matter, etc., etc.—and then, under " Causes ": " The four seasons are caused by the earth going round the sun." Further elucidation—" The same time that the earth is going round the sun, the sun likewise is making a daily circuit round the earth—of course turning with greater rapidity than the earth does ; but we must observe that while the earth is turning to the one hand round the sun the sun is going the reversed way round the earth."

Yet another lesson : on the Turnip and Carrot.

The comparison of the specimens marks a real advance in object lessons.

Teacher—" What colour is the turnip ? "

" White ?—No—green—(leaves of it are)."

" What sort of seeds ? "

" Oh, they're such little tiny ones—AREN'T they ? "

" Come here, Dorothy " (in a voice of thunder).

" Father pulls them up, doesn't he, and then, and then—they grow till they get—they get "—" BEEG." Did they

say "BEET"? For the picture I now see is (an advertisement of course)—a golden globe beet—and a long reddish beet—these are the *sole illustrations*, to represent turnip and carrot. "Now look at the picture—well—this isn't a—we haven't got a (picture of course too small—even if it were a turnip or carrot to be seen by any except the front row—an advantage as it happens in this case !). . . .

"Well, now to proceed to the CARROT—FIRST of all, *if*[1] I *had* a carrot and if I were to cut it. But we didn't spell turnip last—" (mutual dental inspections in the class, toilet exhibitions, etc., and one child under the benches—and if it were not so, they would be unnatural children).

"Now, what kind of seed has the carrot . . . something like carraway seeds, ain't they? (altogether three times), and then they grow—and they grow—and they keep on growing—don't they?"

"Yiss marmm."

"Till they grow into—till they grow into. . . ." "Turmets"——"No, no,—you won't be able to tell your mother about this, Isaac." A very palpable hit—on the attention—but it doesn't last, alas !

"And they grow—all summer—and then mother ?—then mother ?—" "EATS 'EM. . . ." "NO—NO."

She had written notes copied straight from a book and worse still, they bore no resemblance to the actual lesson.

But some of the old-fashioned school mistresses were not much better than the Article 68er.

Here is a specimen. Suffolk agreement in speech, with disagreement in thought.

"Do we teach form? Certainly, sir, certainly—most assuredly—teach form—oh yes, sir."

"They are not formal lessons, I hope."

"No—sir—quite agree with you, sir, most essential to have *no* dead form—homely illustration—every day life.

"John (they know sir, perfectly—so glad to show you sir) what shape's this diamond window pane ?"

Hoarse murmur of some half dozen : "glass."

"No—no—dears, think." (To me): "I always insist on individual answers."

[1] "Ifs" may be said to be the banes of object lessons.

"What *shape*?"

"White."

"Dear, dear—what can you be thinking of—come—what SHAPE?"

"Transparent."

(Grows frantic) "Well really—quite—do you hear me—eh—what shape—is this—here—look," draws her finger round and round the frame—

"Lead."

"Really, dear me,—I can't think how you can be so *nervous*, so very nervous. . . . Why, look how many sides—four isn't it—square isn't it?"

(Altogether) "Square"! Triumph! "I told you they knew, sir."

H.M.I., after lesson on skylark, "Rather meagre your account, wasn't it?"

"Well, you see, sir, I don't tell the class *everything* about it; so as to cultivate their observation better."

Here is a letter from a certificated infant teacher, years ago, showing the same lack of observation relative to the common sea-urchin:—

—— VILLAGE SCHOOL,
"*Jan.* 22*nd*, 1906.

"DEAR SIR,—I know you will be interested to hear that I have found 'The Fairies' Loaf,' and the saying about it is; that while you have it in your house, you will never want bread. It is a beautifully marked stone, and I do not think I saw one like it in your collection. I should very much like you to see it, so perhaps you will call one day as you go by.

"I think it looks like the crucifixion, but I am not sure.—I am, Yours respectfully."

In those days a frequent question was—

"What shape is the camel's body?" What adult can answer?

I think the teacher's solution was "Arch."

And what of a mistress who told infants when nonplussed by the question "What is the shape of a shrimp?" "*Cylindrical*."

"Peter walked on the roof."

"My children—this does not refer to the walk on a steep sloping roof. It's a figurative expression, as we say the walk of faith, duty, etc."

On their way home, assistant teacher two to assistant teacher one: "How did you take that passage?" On hearing she adds—"dear me—you made a dreadful mistake, the proper explanation is 'with man it would be impossible: with God all things are possible.'"

In a lesson on the tiger—the main point which was reiterated *ad nauseam* clothed itself in the question—"What would it do with us?"

"Boite us—kill us—eat us" (in simultaneous moans of unutterable gloom, deepening at each reply).

When a teacher was questioning a class I observed that they were answering from the MAP hung before them. I asked to have the map turned round. Quite forgetting himself, the teacher went on—"Ha! Map turned—ha! Never mind children (Standard IV.-VII.) Its political geography now—we've done the physical"!

H.M.I. (kindly).—"Tell me, Mary, my girl—don't be timid—what do you mean by an island? Come."

Master of the old school.—"Excuse me, sir, may I—the fact is they're rather nervous—a stranger frightens them, may I put the question in my own way?"

H.M.I.—"Certainly."

M.O.S. (transformed to an infuriated coster-monger and roaring like a bull)—"Now then, what's an island—now answer—quick—d'ye hear—out with it now—before I flog yer till yer cant. . . ."

Out it came: "An-island-is-a-piece-of-land-entirely-surrounded-by-warterrrr."

"How many 3s are there in nine?" I ask.

No response.

M.O.S. roars—"Three times table." Obedient to the summons as a spirit roused by a magician's wand—floats out the chimed answer. "Three threes ARE—NINE."

"Then how many 3s are there in nine?"

Dead silence once more.[1]

[1] When the Rev. F. Harcourt Gooch was at Brandeston this same zealous little schoolmaster, whom, from a striking resemblance, we

Here is an extract from an ancient village log book :—

June 3. Caned ——. After several moments dallying with, held out, and after receiving the stroke, took up a stool (placed before him to kick at if he liked instead of me) with evil intentions."

Another—"Yesterday effected a very successful lateral movement. . . . marching two pupil teachers up the coast —to surprise four truants bathing—posted myself between them and their clothes—cane in hand—and *waited.*"

In my young days one rural school mistress once misinterpreted my kindness, which was prompted by a desire to dispel her nervousness, and when, after some other questions I asked her if she could give before me a lesson on the "Reindeer."

She replied, simpering, "I have one on clouds and mist, but I have not one on rain."

Would it be believed that years ago it was possible to meet with a village schoolmaster who on his list of recitations spelt it Brutius. Still more wonderful, he defended it, and would not be convinced until he had brought me to book.

"Ah," he then said—"it was Cassius—I knew there was an i somewhere."

I once heard a town assistant ask 6-year-old children—"What was particularly noticeable about that star?"

A village mistress, when I found mistakes not marked, replied, "Didn't want to discourage him, sir."

When taxed with tearing out pages from an exercise book, another replied "If a leaf is blotted I tear it out—I don't believe in letting the children see bad work." Possibly she did not wish the inspector to see bad work either.

"Your pupil teacher has confused 'Oratio Obliqua' and

nicknamed "Socrates," in the course of a lesson, wrote on the black board "Sauce of the Thames." Mr and Mrs Gooch, the master's wife and myself were listening from a distance; and we thought that faithful woman was still amongst us, when a lean arm and blue duster shot out from behind the black board, and lo! a blank space where "Sauce" was. A glance of despair from the master at the Inspector as if to say "Am I a ruined man?" found me intent on a wall picture wherein an angel with large feet was sprinkling mustard over the globe—and by the time I had turned round again, the gap was filled—and all went merrily as a marriage bell.

'Oratio recta,'" said a village manager who had kindly corrected some papers.

"Well, you see, sir," was the reply—"She doesn't know much about Horatio—she did not take up Roman history."

I once read a clergyman's letter recommending mistresses in preference to masters as cheaper. It is a thorny question, but it occurred to me when I read it that—there is a class of cultivators who DO succeed in Suffolk—for often a growth of the specimen known as "an incorrigible" is produced by a village schoolmistress, especially where the support of the parson or policeman is not available.

CHAPTER XVII

CHILDREN

Few adults really understand children, and yet the child has a world of its own. Even in a London Hotel through your open window you may trace the sound of it, like a stream flowing in another stream, and yet distinct. Their voices, on their way to and from school, mark off the hours with the regularity of the striking of a clock, or the wild-flowers in a hedge. One of the most salient characteristics of childhood is a certain delicacy and even tenderness of sympathy.

Into "the mouths of babes and sucklings" nowadays are frequently put answers that bear the impress of more matured minds; and a lengthened and intimate acquaintance with child life is needed to distinguish the spurious from the genuine article. Artless simplicity and an entire absence of anything like bitterness, cynicism, or profanity, mark the answers that ring true.

One of many instances is furnished by the following story:—

A young curate in Lancashire, who, though too well-bred to boast, was conscious of the world of difference his earnestness had effected in a parish which was suffering from the slackness of a rector of the old school, was once questioning a class:—

"Tell me one of the people who wrote the Bible?"

Unhesitating reply—"Master Heyes." Now Heyes was the name of the rector.

Even that curate's iron self-control could not prevent a shadow of disappointment from passing over his face. After his years of work, so fruitful in results, so obvious—that they should still think this of his rector! But though the little girl just under him was not more than five, her eye,

keen as a robin's, had read his thoughts, and her tiny voice whispered :—

" Please, sir, you 'elped 'im."

The kind pity they have for an Inspector, a pity quite free from the interested motives that must inevitably, to a large extent, influence even the best managers and teachers. They view him as they would some weird animal, that needs strange food, and loves to be petted and stroked.

In the geography of England, I ask what separates it from Scotland ?

" The Pyrenees."

" Oh ! Don't you know any geography at all ? "

" Oh, yes sir," (comfortingly) and off she rattles with a list of names, ending up with " Cheviot Hills on the south."

" Oh ! "

" Please sir, it says so in my book."

" Bring it."

She brought it—the manual she referred to was " Scotland " not " England."

On another occasion a school mistress in tones of angry remonstrance, asked her class :—

" What ! none of you knows this colour ? "

A six year old in the front row, after peering anxiously round behind her, burst into tears, sobbing—

" Nooo—they none of 'em know," as much as to say—" You'd better cane us at once and have done with it."

Budding inspectors, however kind, soon learn how an expression of keenness on their faces, when eager in their work, will produce weeping which spreads like a prairie fire, and is only with difficulty stopped by vigorous hugging on the part of female teachers or managers.

I once called out a little girl, *æt.* 10, whose long hair kept wiping her slate, wet with her tears, over a subtraction sum.

" Let me help you, dear—do it with me."

" Six from eight leaves two—four from nine—five "—she sobbed.

" That's right ; well done—go on."

" Nine from four—in a burst of despair—won't goooo ! "

The eyes of the class, moistened with sympathy, were a study for an artist.

In my sister's Sunday school class at Brighton, sat, pain-

fully stiff and curled as to her hair, copious with grease, a butcher's little girl of six—her apparel, the envy of her neighbours who stroked it from time to time. Upon the third rebuke for inattention, she strode towards the door; to be intercepted by my sister, who laid her hand on the handle. A scene followed, the little girl's seven-year-old brother croaking hoarsely—

"Boit it Olive, boit it. . . ."

What was my sister's surprise when the following Sunday the same boy, of whom she stood in mortal terror, sat next to her apparently intent on sucking the buttons off her mantle.

To her relief she heard a whisper—

"Don't mind last Sunday—That was one of my bad days."

And who can fail to love the little girl who, when the teacher asked, "Was it not wrong of Dives to give the crumbs to Lazarus"; and when they all of course moaned, "Yees"—demurred—"Perhaps, ma'm, Lazarus kept chickens."

I always found that, in anything worth doing, children were my best friends. *They* never found fault with examinations.

Here is an extract from a theme on the inspector:—"I thought he was a kind gentleman, better than the last one, and I have done all in my power to please him. He has born with the children very well and I shall try to read well for him.

"He seems to be a man of good ability, when I go home I shall tell my parents I liked him very well."

To us it is what we think, but to the child, it is what he or she thinks, and this gives them an amusingly patronising air.

Need I add the unspoken testimony of the robins at Tuddenham who built their nest four yards from the door of the school, and in a bank accessible to every boy of eight—and laid six eggs, hatching five (I saw them nearly ready for flight) when a little girl, in reply to the mistress's question—

"Who broke that one?"

Replied, "You did, marm, if you remember, it was addled."

And then their strange way of looking at things.

Teacher reads: "The bears came and devoured forty-two of the children who were mocking the prophets."

"What lesson do you draw from this?"

"It shows, teacher, what a number of little children a great she-bear can hold."

And their sighs of importance, and side glances at me, when, as a reward for good conduct they are posted in front of their classes!

To help a mistress in despair over an incorrigible of six, I suggested the elephant plan, *i.e.* a wild one between two tame ones. We had scarcely turned our backs, when a sound, like a pistol shot, was heard—the incorrigible had attempted to converse with one of the girls who acted as tame elephants, and a box on the ears was all he received from her. Children properly handled, become their own teachers.

It is the time of afternoon assembly in a town school—and two rough mechanics at the school door have sealed with parting kisses the lips of their precious mites. As I enter there is the usual greylight of happy ordinary routine in all the little faces.[1]

Suddenly, O rapture! the sound of a hurdy gurdy outside—quite near—breaks the stillness. You, who would learn unspoken language, study the marvellous change on their faces—Only a few give way to parted lips and catherine wheel revolutions of arms—but oh! the ineffable delight.

2.10. Enter the incorrigible truant—with a dogged air.

"Open your hands, sir! Yes, all covered with dirt. Stand so, with both hands held up before the class—that they may see your palms and learn by your sad example."

2.20 The door slowly opens and a less hardened sinner enters. Scene: on the stage constituted by the teaching space—The truant, Johnny the good and the mistress.

"Johnny, YOU late." Johnny's head droops in silence. There is an awful pause. It is too much for the incorrigible, he cannot resist the *importance* of the occasion—"Misss—Misss—Misss."

"Well, sir" (severely). "What do you wish to say?"

[1] My typewriter wrote "torture" for "routine." Was it my bad writing, or any unpleasant school reminiscences of her own?

"I know—I know what made 'im late. He stopped to 'ear the 'urdy gurdy."

All the while the incorrigible spoke, he kept his guilty hands out far in front of him—as though he had nothing to do with them! They were the sinners, but he himself was still a saint.

Which of us has not stopped to hear our hurdy gurdies; and which of us can resist casting the first stone—especially when it makes us so important?

"The devil and all his works" elicited characteristic explanation of the last word. The watchmaker's daughter said "His inside" and the girl from the village shop said "Fireworks," but there was yet more shrewdness in the answer of the boy who, when the next boy had replied to the question—

"What bird did Noah let out of the ark?"

"A dove,"

sprang up and explained,

"Please sir, his father's a bird catcher."

But what lessons children teach us men.

A parvenu squire after a heavy lesson on grammar, so to speak leaps into the saddle, to show them how.

"You don't want to 'arrass your mind with words—you want things—now a noun—look at me—What am I?"

"You, sir, why you're a *gentleman!*"

"Well, yes—err—yes quite so," and a sunny smile dispelled the clouds of criticism on his brow.

Lunching at Lady —— I observed a nonagenarian relative, seated next to my hostess, and apparently taking no interest in the conversation of a large and distinguished company. Upon his suddenly, to my amazement, demanding a school story from me, and upon my, of course, having to meet a general silence with complete failure of memory, he told one himself—to show how an examiner's vanity may be chastened by children.

The diocesan inspector, after a dissertation on the folly of not availing ourselves of the natural taste of the young, *e.g.* love of animals—proceeded to "show off" on a class.

"Specify the names of some of the animals that went into the ark." Perhaps it was the word "specify," or it may have been that he should have said *one* animal—anyhow,

though he went almost to the lengths of the prophets of Baal no answer came.

At last, one hand—" Please, sir, *a worrrm*."

" Well, yes—but surely you can."—Another lengthy silence and, at last, the same hand.

" Well, my dear child."

" Please, sir—another *worrrm*."

The diocesan inspector resumed his seat, a sadder and a wiser man.

How frantically their little feet are thrust out for a purchase on the floor, when one of them is praised—and when one of them has answered (for example) " A—weathercock—is—the—figure—of—a-cock—sur—mounted—on—four—arms—at the end of which—are the—following—letters—N. E. W. S." The relapse into her seat, with the waggle to arrange her dress, and an expression of ineffable peace and bliss—is a sight not to be missed.

" *Teacher*, I'm sittin' roight still," broke the silence of awe at my first appearance in one infant school.

That little bundle of restlessness knew how hard it was for children to sit still—which adults too often forget—and the temptation to secure recognition was irresistible. How often adults try to force young children to obey two masters —the Great Creator's muscle law of movement, and the teacher's " feet together," " sit quite still."

The school mistress, who had just quoted to me " Love rules without the sword " and a good deal more about love, will not forget the answer to her question—

" Now what did I say I'd do, dears, if you didn't please the nice, kind Inspector ? "

" Please, ma'm, you said you'd caane us ! "

Nor will that other dreary one, who asked " Why was the Eunuch glad when Philip went away ? "

" Becos he had give over teachin' on him."

I have heard children lead a catechising clergyman on, as anglers play fishes, till thanks to their smiles and well feigned breathless attention, he does all the talking. Similarly a Lancashire boy corrects his teacher, who asked the meaning of " kiss." No answer—definitions rarely are forthcoming—

" Kissing ? kissing your mother ? "

No answer.

"Suppose I were to ask you to go and kiss that pretty little girl—what would you do."

"Shouldn't go."

"What is proportion?" asked another teacher.

Answer—"What the fifth standard have to do."

And sometimes this develops to a fault. A Pakefield girl, *æt.* 12, whom I informed that she ought not to have left school replied with a toss of her curls—"that's what mother says—but I think differently."

I once, at Sternfield, on a pouring wet day, saw a mother pushing her child in a perambulator uphill—herself drenched—her child monopolising the umbrella, from under which a voice reached me in a high dog-cart.

"Mother, I don't like it."

Are we spoiling the children generally? Possibly to some extent, but against the girl with a sweet in one hand and a penny novelette in the other we must put the daughter of a cottage woman that I know. While she was out nursing, her husband and two grown up sons were left in charge of the said Mary (*æt.* 13 and not robust). Here is a rough time-table of Mary's day.

Up at 6 A.M. Father's breakfast—makes bed—clears breakfast—sets dinner—school—gets her father's dinner and her own, clears and goes to school again—comes home, makes up the fire, prepares tea—either washes socks of all three and hangs them up to darn another day, or writes letters to her sister, or reads, to her father, or when he comes to see how mother is, is allowed, as a treat, to trot beside him. Bed about 8 P.M. and this for three weeks—with short weekly visits of the mother to her home.

School education to do any good must be supplemented by a good home. The neighbours describe Mary's home as "neat as a new pin," and are surprised to hear her tramping about so early in the morning. Home lessons like these are not far off the mark—but I am told that Mary also brings wonders home from school and words to explain to the wide-eyed parents—words not dreamed of in her mother's philosophy or school life. "Something about an egg, I forget what it was—but I never heered such a name afore" (says her mother). Possibly there may be too much unnecessary and expensive correspondence nowadays among the poor;

but I believe the good in the case I cite comes from the mother's education of thirty years ago, and we shall have to hark back a little—to old times, if education is to be the blessing it should be.

Mary was one of the best attendants at the cookery class, where she was in common with the rest of the class told by a lady manager that "God made food but the devil made cooks"—a remark true and hackneyed enough, but not suitable for children.

Things told at school do not end there and Mary duly inquired of her mother and father—"That's what she sayy —that ain't right mother? She didn't ort to sayy that?"

"No, my dear, she didn't."

Presently, after deliberation—

"Mother, the devil didn't REALLY make cooks—did he?"

Jokes of course are among the best approaches to the hearts of children; but they must be jokes suitable to their age and environment.

What says General Gatacre? "The Suffolk recruits are better physically and morally than at the time of Waterloo"; and Lord Kitchener expressly states that it is through the rank and file of the army, that the nation now has the joy of seeing a peaceful conclusion of the South African War.

People who ridicule the results of elementary school teaching, should remember how large a portion of the faults of the domestic servant is due to a faulty example. The lower classes (if the word "lower" may be used to designate the class whose children attend the public elementary school, a class which does not hesitate to apply, and apply with a vengeance, the adjective to the class beneath it) always did, and always will mirror the faults of their masters and mistresses and furthermore 300 years ago the same complaint filled the air:

Orlando says to his servant (Adam):—

> "O good old man; how well in thee appears
> The constant service of the antique world,
> When service sweat for duty, not for meed!
> Thou art not for the fashion of these times,
> Where none will sweat, but for promotion;
> And having that, do choke their service up
> Even with the having. It is not so with thee."

On the other hand, is England becoming a "drawing-room" of the Empire?

A lady wrote to me:—

"I asked our Bacchus[1] boy yesterday the name of the capital of Ireland. He did not know. I then put the same question concerning Scotland. He did not know. Why, Harry, I said, 'What did you learn at school?' 'Gardening, Miss.' Wasn't it clever of him? He thought I knew nothing about gardening and could bother him no more with questions. He was a Suffolk boy."

"What is the matter with you?" asked a schoolmistress of a malingering boy—in Lancashire.

"I'm baad——"

"What is the matter?"

"Nout."

"Who told you to say you were bad?"

"Motherrr!"

"Pas trop gouverner" is a golden maxim. Fear begets falsehood. Love begets trust.

Children have generalized to one degree but not to two, *e.g.* take children's views on the following points:—

1. *Throwing Stones.* It is nice to throw straight. Not yet corrected by—cruelty to birds.

2. *Stealing apples.* Apples are nice. Not yet corrected by "Stealing is wrong."

3. *Breaking dolls.* Curiosity is the root of science. "I wonder what's inside." Not yet corrected by "Don't destroy." We adults must make allowance and gradually lead to the higher generalization. A wilful child is too often a misnomer. The will is not yet matured.

Children are often punished for obedience to a Higher Master. Liberty is as dear to children as to adults. "We have no punishment for days after the use of coloured chalks," said one mistress and the grateful smile on the childrens' faces when a touch of fun lightens work is another lesson for us, *e.g.* "The pig in its pen. Is it a pen like this one in my hand?"

[1] Back-house boy.

"Oh nooo—tea—char"—the emphasis on the "char" speaking volumes—however silly the question seems to grown up people.

Observing a girl supposed to be minding a baby at home, but as a matter of fact, discharging that office on the steps outside the school. (So magical is the influence that nowadays draws children to school as in olden times it drew them from school.) I coaxed her in, not without tears—but never did Standard III. girls behave themselves better. It was as if I had introduced a sort of fetish of good conduct and when the two year old began to clutch at the knitting cotton, the radiance of their faces was a study. They did more work that afternoon than they ever did—for was there not a chance of nursing that baby? It taught the mistress and me a lesson, and managers of schools like that where the chief ornament was a conspicuous "Rational Sick and Burial Association" posted up on a black-board—or a faded plan of Jerusalem—or a map of the Holy Land, with all below Jerusalem gone, in tatters, might learn something too, as also might the teacher who for months had a broken window blocked with a very dilapidated Aaron, stopping the plague—upside down of course.

But though love rules without the sword; the sword must be there.

Says the teacher. "Now make a square with the sticks and peas." A four year old, just admitted, declines, and the teacher is on the point of yielding when I intervene—beginnings being of such vital moment.

"Touch them," I said. No response—

"Stand," she does—twelve times. "Come out," she does not budge an inch. "Shall I fetch Mr —— with a cane." She leaps out. We now come to the square; and the stern joy, that warriors feel, is in my breast, and hers too, as she bounds out with a square in her hand. Is there such a word as "namby-pamby?" Nevertheless one still recoils from the following reply. "If I had my time again," said a school mistress to me, "I'd never be a teacher."

"Why?"

"Because you musn't give corporal punishment nowadays."

I wonder whether any other H.M.I. has waited from 9 A.M. to 9 P.M. on a railway platform, holding hands with five

children ranging from about 8 to 12, as I did at Ipswich some years ago.

The father had torn up the white dresses in which his children, the smartest of the squad, were to compete for the drill shield at the Prize Scheme. His wife had left him through his unkind treatment of her; but he came to me in an agony of grief.

"If you could only get her back, sir, I would go down on my knees to her," etc., etc. "She will pass through Ipswich on such and such a day," etc. She did *not* pass through, as expected; but she heard about it, and it was the means of bringing her back. The children came, and won the shield; but alas! his subsequent conduct was marked by abominable ingratitude to her and me.

George Spence, aged 3½, in a small country school, after his slate was filled, amused himself on the reverse side, and when I was passing he mutely held up his slate for me to see, as much as to say, "I've written all these pot-hooks, and I have drawn something on the back; but no one looks at either." The drawing so astonished me that I made a copy of it to show (1) what a child can do in imitating and committing to slate from memory (2) how serious the loss of time when such faculties are not cultivated. No academy picture surpasses this sketch in interest. Minute details of harness, hoofs, wheels, driver, shafts, and even the step, are there; and, bear in mind, it was his own. No mortal man or woman could have set that copy. It is above all petty laws of perspective, etc. the four wheels, four feet and step are in one horizontal line—the driver resembling one of the dancing oysters in "Alice's Adventures."

May I here, in view of the happiness of the children of the poor generally in East Suffolk, congratulate the county on its schools—the efficiency and sufficiency of their staff and the wonderful advance in structure, equipment and apparatus, especially since the Scheme began, remembering we are but rural—above all things remembering what we were?

I drove from Halesworth, a few years ago, to eight rural schools. Each one was good, though each one used to be bad. It was like driving past peaceful, deep-hearted, sweet smelling roses, where once grew noxious weeds. Little

difference, someone says, it makes to the great world, whether Suffolk lanes contain such roses or such weeds; but it makes all the difference in the world to those who have to dwell in or visit the lanes, and eventually all the difference to the great world.

Years, the best test of truth, have only served to confirm the impressions I strove to convey in a Souvenir which, in addition to a gift of a copy to each head teacher, realised £25 (handed to the East Suffolk prize scheme in 1901)—and the exceedingly kind words of my successor, encourage me to hope that the lines are still appreciated—

A School Inspector's Prayer in the Train

Would child-life—pure and sunny—were to me
What sport, and air, and Nature are to thee,
Thou keenest sportsman on the wildest moor—
Or e'en dry flints, and antiquarian lore!

"So mad it seems"—(say men by no means fools)—
"This taste for grubbing in close, uppish schools"—
Oh, save, oh, save me, from their poison's leaven,
Thou who has told the world "Of such is Heaven!"

How a Well-taught School Teaches its Inspector

(*Written at Laxfield*)

Kneel when they kneel, and let the wave on wave
Of simple childhood's goodness o'er thee lave—
Eyes fresh as wet stones on a sunlit strand,
And soft as ocean's gentlest kiss to land—
And thou shalt rise once more, erect and strong—
Wash'd from thy soul all that is vain—or wrong!

O listen to the hymn that ends the day;
Or when, like sweet waves curling, bow'd they pray—

No melody of sea, or wood, or bird,
No charm of saintliest preacher ever heard ;
No mother's love, nor woman's tenderest tear,
No pity—e'er to earth drew Heaven more near.

Adieu ! my dear Suffolk children. I never told you—how could I ?—of all the good you and your teachers have done others—as well as yourselves. How often have your lessons, like Orlando's wrestling, overthrown more than their adversary !

Scene.—A class of six year olds in a model country school.

Present.—An adult visitor who I happen to know is in the full swing of repentance for having yielded to temptation, and myself.

Children's voices lend an additional charm to the singing of :—

"Perverse and foolish, oft I strayed."

Then the teacher :—" You've had the cross, dears, haven't you ?—the Rector put it on—little soldiers, you have to fight—suppose you saw a very pretty . . . flower—oh, so nice ! in someone else's garden, not your own, and oh you do so long for it ! You'd have to fight, oh so hard ! Or if you saw a bit of sugar" (a rapturous " Yiss marm ") " such a nice bit, and mother not near—Jesus sees His little soldier —peeping down from up in Heaven—oh, wouldn't you like . . . and then suppose you did . . . no one is perfect—even big people. Sometimes even "—casting a glance at us—of course, merely to enjoy the appreciation her heart in her work has accustomed her to expect. She has all the " thou shalt not's " at her finger-ends, " What's the first ? now the second—now the sixth "—yes the visitor's expression seems to say " Oh please stop." (It is all so vivid.)

" What, not tell mother, well you are a naughty boy " (glancing at visitor) : but only, of course, as before. " He was in the room alone—no one was looking—here comes mother. Shall I tell her ? Did you say ' no ' Charlie, you naughty boy "—the visitor is very restless in his seat.

" I shall be obliged to punish you "—the visitor flies. The teacher goes on, " If you said ' Please, mother, I have taken

a bun, I was so hungry,' would she forgive ? Mother saw the crumbs, did not mother love you when she whipped." Prolonged melancholy wail—' She HATED us.' . . ."

Alas ! skilled though the teacher was, she overshot her mark, through not allowing for the matter-of-fact views taken by children. The point of her lesson, however, was not lost, for like Sir Walter Tyrrell's arrow it had glanced off to pierce a breast for which it was not intended.

APPENDIX I

(Examination)

" Blue-book," 1896 :—

" There is no question as to the difference in the happiness of the child. Sympathy, gently lifting over difficulties and stimulating to self-help, which is of the essence of true teaching, has its full weight now, and not the mere result, however achieved, at whatever cost to future health, to sound thoughtfulness, and to a real abiding taste for intellectual pursuits. It had come to be a case of the pains rather than the pleasures of knowledge, and teachers in some instances may almost be said to have waded through children's tears to reputation. I am now never told about the boy who broke his arm the day before the examination, and ' it would not have mattered so much if it had been the day after.' Wonderful flowers such a forcing system may produce, but a little deterioration is a cheap price to be released from it —not to mention the teacher's relief, and a worried teacher means a worried child."

And again in 1898 :—

" The prominence now accorded to methods, etc., is (after a certain amount of natural opposition fast melting away) fully appreciated by managers and teachers, who, recognising that the so-called ' results ' system has done its work, are loyally advancing to the higher state of things now attainable ; and, though admittedly cramped by long custom, are loud in its praises. The new system, which carries one step further the principle of self-help (which is the soul of true teaching), by practically making the teacher his own examiner, has been inaccurately described as the abolition of examinations and results, whereas it should strengthen both by removing the weakening friction between inspector and teacher.

"Taught by long years of experience the best forms of examination, the teacher can now apply them himself, and, laying his fingers on the weak points, however sceptical before, he believes—and he and his inspector are no longer in hostile camps. Nor have I so far found this privilege abused; whereas questions were often furtively transmitted from school to school under the old system.

"It is no reflection upon the laudable and earnest efforts that characterise the teachers of East Suffolk to add that so far this district has shown to better advantage under the old system. The very poverty which accounts for the lack of efficient help (the weak point in my district) tells here; though this same poverty could, under the old system, stimulate to burning devotion, which led to marvellous child achievements of mechanical accuracy.

"But when it came to tearing the curtain aside and subjecting the *methods* to the searching scrutiny of the new and better system, Suffolk schools told a different tale. For instance, I have known a class teacher who could proudly guarantee you 'four right out of four,' turn pale at the request to expound the principle of a sum, illustrate a fact, etc., and yet the perplexity of a child when expected to assimilate dry principles, before they have been clothed in the fresh life of example, illustration, etc., resembles that of a horse expected to assimilate direct the principles of his food in dry earth, before they have clothed themselves in vegetation.

"For myself—even if the work be more exacting—the pleasure of watching the play of child thought and feeling, etc., without having the surface ruffled by (for example) a manager's voice inveighing against rural imbecility, or Form IX., is indeed a boon, and I always find the managers glad to see me if I have anything worth troubling them about. As for the children, parents no longer complain of arithmetic cards worked in their sleep; and I am now less likely to elicit from a class whose faces are horror-stricken with a 'creepy' tale, firstly, that they do believe in ghosts; secondly, that a ghost is a spectre; and finally, that a spectre is—'one that comes round to examine'!"

Nor can these extracts be brushed aside as ancient history; for the County Councils of to-day are in danger of a relapse to the cruel rites of the 3R percentage fetish, as they already

worship a horrible percentage fetish in the matter of attendance.

NOTE.—H.M. Inspectors, in my time, were appointed by the Sovereign in Council—and it is still a berth that many seek but few secure.

APPENDIX II

(LETTERS)

(*Notes were taken at the time by all. There were twenty-nine letters—all different.*)

"LEISTON GIRLS' SCHOOL,
"SUFFOLK, *July 2nd*, 1901.

"DEAR ADA,—I am going to tell you how I was invited to Mr Swinburne's. It was very kind of Canon Raven to hire the trap for us. In the morning our governess showed us how to draw a plan. I think Mr Swinburne was very kind to have us go. We rode there and walked back. We started from the school at 2 o'clock and arrived at Snape Priory between 5 and 20 and 20 to 3.

"When we got there a lady invited us to go on the golf ground and rest till Mr Swinburne came. When Mr Swinburne came, he told us to go along his fence and see if we could see any butcher birds, but we could not see any.

"Then we went and sat under some pine trees, while Mr Swinburne talked, then he told two girls to go and ask for his spying glass, and we saw Iken Church Tower and the windows in it. Then Mr Swinburne told about the mounds and what he dug out of them.

"Then we went on the ground where they played golf and the place where flags were, he called the places the birds' names.

"One corner was called the lark, the butcher bird, the starling, and different others. Then we went and saw the wryneck's nest in Mr Swinburne's gate-post. Then we went and sat down on the grass and we had a very nice tea. Then after tea we went into Mr Swinburne's study and saw a box of nice coloured shells. Then he shew us different sorts of stones, shaped of all animal's (sic) heads. Then we went into another room and he showed us his curiosities and some photographs of all the schools. Then Miss Lamb thought it was time to come home so Mr Swinburne thought he would

like to hear us sing. When we had done singing Mr Swinburne said he should like us to go in for the competition next year. If we do and we don't get a prize Mr Swinburne was willing to let us come over again. Then Mr Swinburne told us he was very pleased to have us come. But me, I enjoyed it very much and I should like very much again to come, I remain, your affectionate friend, ALICE SMITH."

"GIRLS' SCHOOL, LEISTON,
"SUFFOLK, *Sept.* 12*th*, 1901.

"DEAR EVA,—I will tell you about the outing we had one afternoon.

"We were asked by Mr Swinburne to go to his house, and see some curious old things, which he treasures. I think he must be an antiquarian.

"We were driven there in a brake, and when we arrived, we were taken on the golf-links by a lady, which was very nice.

"When Mr Swinburne came, he very kindly took us to sit under a group of pine trees, twenty-nine in all. They had once been a part of the old avenue which had extended for miles.

"He was most kind to us and told us about the original owners of the Wentworth estate.

"We were also shown Iken Church, through a pair of opera glasses.

"When we had rested, Mr Swinburne took us on the golf-links again, and told us about the different birds which build their nests there. There was one bird which was most interesting called the butcher bird. It stores food up for itself by catching flies and sticking them on thorns on the hedge.

"We were also told the difference between swallows and swifts. Swallows have forked tails, and fly along the ground, while swifts have flat tails and fly up in the air, swallows too build in houses while the swift builds in a sand bank.

"He has a little cage too, in which a red start built. It hatched its eggs and brought up its young. But one day on, on going to the cage he was surprised to see lying on the floor three young ones quite dead, and a dead sparrow too. It was never found out how it happened, but it is supposed that the sparrow came to fight the old birds, and in the fight the young ones were killed too.

"On his golf ground he has nine links, which are called after certain birds, which are found there. They run as follows:—Mistle-thrush, nightingale, swift, swallow, lark, wryneck, redstart, curlew, and the butcher bird.

"We were then taken into Mr Swinburne's den, where we saw two cases of most pretty shells.

"We then had tea on the lawn, which was most delightful.

"After tea, we were taken into the dining-room to see his curiosities, which are very wonderful. He has two splendid urns, in which Saxon bones were found. Also a boat was found, in which was a Danish Viking, clad in armour. A servant was also found with him. He has also numerous nails, and sword handles. The teeth and hair of a man was also found.

"These wonderful things were found under two mounds close to Mr Swinburne's house.

"We were also shown some photographs and sang two or three songs. We then came home by the field, after having a most lovely time, thanks to Mr Swinburne, who was so very kind, and I am sure we all feel most grateful for his kindness and thoughtfulness to us.—I remain, your loving friend,

"GRACE."

"LEISTON GIRLS' SCHOOL,
"SUFFOLK, *Sept.* 12*th*, 1901.

"DEAR MARY,—I will tell you about our visit to Mr Swinburne's.

"We were driven there in the brake, we went up the Saxmundham road, went past Knodishall Church and then through Friston and saw the schools at a distance. We came out where they are now building Snape vicarage and then we drove a little way down the sandy lane and drove into the gate as that is where Mr Swinburne's house is situated. We got out of the brake and went and sat on the bank along the drive. Then a lady came out and took us up on the golf-links as Mr Swinburne was not quite ready. But we didn't have to wait long as Mr Swinburne soon came out and beckoned to us, so he told us about some very peculiar birds, called butcher birds.

"These birds store up their food by getting all sorts of flies and sticking them on to a prickle in the hedge.

"Then we went up to a clump of tall fir-trees, and Mr Swinburne kindly explained and showed us where the great avenue which stretched from Mr Wentworth's estate to Campse Ashe and we were also told about the old Packsaddle Road, where the monks of olden times used to ride. Mr Swinburne also allowed us to look through his opera glasses at Iken Church.

"Then we went and looked at the swifts' nests which were built in the sand, and then Mr Swinburne showed us the nest of a wryneck, which was built in a gate-post, he also told us of a bird which lived in a cage he had put on a tree, this bird had three young birds, and Mr Swinburne was very much surprised when he came one morning and found the bird and its young and an old sparrow lying dead on the ground. It is supposed that they quarrelled about who should live in the cage and that the old sparrow killed the other bird and its young and then ended it by committing suicide. Mr Swinburne called this 'Snape Tragedy.' We then went and looked at some peculiar shaped stones in the study and then we had tea on the grass. After tea we went in the dining-room and were shown some very ancient curiosities, which were dug out of mounds on the common. We were shown an old tumbler which was so called because it would not stand, we saw old axe-heads, hair, and different things which were used in war, some gums and teeth, a piece of an old comb, bowls which were used in the time of the Saxons and Danes, Mr Swinburne seems quite an antiquarian. Then we saw some photos of many different schools round about, including ourselves, then we sang a song or two and then we went and got some cones and after thanking Mr and Mrs Swinburne we started homeward, we were accompanied by a lady up to the first stile and then we came home by the fields after spending a very enjoyable afternoon, kindly given by Mr and Mrs Swinburne.—I remain, yours affectionately, CHRISSIE."

APPENDIX III

(Prize Scheme)

From *Lambert's Almanac* (1908), Woodbridge, which contains a full independent account of the Scheme—I quote extracts :—

"In 1881, isolation prevented, in many cases, any advancement;[1] teachers knew no other methods but their own; there was no meeting of teachers; no learning from one another; each went on ploughing his lonely furrow. Mr Swinburne knew of the vast difference that existed between a good school and a bad school—how could he raise the one to the other? it was impossible to get all the schools or all the scholars together: but the teachers could meet and examine the work from all the schools. . . . Teachers dispersed and wondered why such a meeting had not been held in the past. . . .

"A teachers' library was now added to the scheme, Sir Richard Wallace contributing £10 towards the initial expense. This library has been and is now of great utility to the teachers; the books are sent to a depôt, from whence they are circulated each month to the teachers, each school passing the books on to the next school. The teachers pay the small sum of 2s. per year, and for this they each receive twenty-four books. Mention must also be made here of Mr Justinian Pelly, of Yoxford, Mr Richard Proctor, Archbishop Benson, and Archbishop Trench, of Dublin, who presented to the library a large number of books of standard authors. Mr E. G. Warren, Framlingham School, became the secretary to the Teachers' Library, and has continued to hold that position since the time it was started. . . .

"In 1888, Her Royal Highness the Princess Christian became a Patroness, being 'pleased to give her name to the good work.' The *Queen* newspaper said of the scheme, this year, that 'it was marked by much success,' and Lord Carlingford said, 'the work has his Lordship's warmest sympathy.' . . .

"In 1891, East Suffolk was honorably mentioned in *Circular*

[1] Note mine, not *Almanac's*.—A village headmistress, who migrated to a town in another county, after telling her inspector there about this backwardness, was subsequently horrified to discover (for he was silent) that he was my predecessor!

297 (Training of Pupil Teachers), issued by the Education Department, 'in the establishment of a Prize Scheme for encouraging the efforts of Teachers, and the friends of Education.' Sir Josuha Fitch wrote that a scheme of this kind 'gives teachers a higher ideal of their work.' The *School Guardian* the same year, in its leading article, said, 'The East Suffolk Sewing Scheme has been a very efficient agency in producing a spirit of wholesome emulation amongst the various schools in the district over which it extends.' . . .

"1902 saw a change in the Gen. Hon. Sec., Mr Busby, Yoxford, taking the place of Mr Bryant, Laxfield, who had worked with great energy during his years of office. The following also became assistant secretaries—Mr W. Smith, Henham; Mr F. J. Ratcliffe, Lowestoft; Mr Pleasants, Metfield; Mr T. Rice, Earl Soham. Notwithstanding the great year of 1901, the Annual Meeting was a decided success, the drawing section particularly showing great improvement. Mr J. C. Colville (H.M.I. Surrey), gave an address, and said that 'the work he had seen that day was creditable and instructive to any body of teachers in the world.' . . .

"1903 saw the taking over of the schools by the East Suffolk County Council, under the Education Act, 1902. The area of the Prize Scheme district being enlarged by all the schools coming under one education authority, the Ipswich district was added to the Beccles district, and schools were invited to compete from the whole of the county of East Suffolk. Many of the subscribers to the scheme now thought that the County Council should take over the scheme, and carry on its useful work. Accordingly, application was made in June, 1904, to that body, that they should take over the Scheme. In July, before the result was made known, came the annual meeting, when Mr Swinburne gave his farewell address as president, the final words upon a movement which had engaged his unceasing attention and sympathy for twenty-four years, through many and varied vicissitudes. It was marked by characteristic geniality, a veneer of jocularity, which, one feared, cloaked a heavy heart on the severance of a life-long effort on behalf of Education. . . . The County Council after several months consideration, decided, in March 1905, not to take over the scheme, and the committee of the scheme had thus two alternatives, to allow the scheme

to drop, or work it as before, relying on the kindness of their former subscribers. Lord Stradbroke was invited to become President, and he replied by telegram, 'Scheme has Lord Stradbroke's warmest support, and he accepts Presidentship unhesitatingly.' Accordingly in July, 1905, the exhibition was held at Ipswich,[1] in the higher grade schools. Old friends rallied round the flag and many new ones were found in the new district. The new president took an active interest in its work, and with the help of a strong committee, Mr Swinburne and the sub-inspectors, Mr J. J. Steele and Mr T. Hunt, all worked with untiring energy to secure the success of the annual exhibition."

I append a few extracts from the Scheme "Log."

The ladies who distributed the prizes were :—

1881. The late Countess of Stradbroke.
1882. The late Countess of Stradbroke.
1883. The Lady Constance Barne ("Whatsoever things are true," etc.).
1885. The Lady Constance Barne.
1886. The late Countess of Stradbroke.
1887. The late Countess of Stradbroke.
1888. Lady Blois (strongly recommended knitting).
1889. The late Mrs Lomax.
1891. The Hon. Anne Vanneck.
1892. The Hon. Miriam Thellusson.
1893. The late Lady Adair.
1894. The Lady Constance Barne.
1895. The late Hon. Mrs Lowther ("Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do," etc.).
1896. Mrs Lucas (Easton Park).
1897. The Countess of Stradbroke.
1898. The Hon. Mrs Ivo Bligh (now Countess of Darnley) (delivered an admirable speech on libraries).
1899. Mrs Long, Hurt's Hall.
1900. The Hon. Anne Vanneck.
1901. The Countess of Stradbroke.
1902. The Hon. Mrs Vanneck.

[1] Note, not in *Almanac*.—Even the huge marquees which took the place of the Saxmundham Town Hall failed to provide the space required.

1904. Mrs Vernon-Wentworth.
1905. The Countess of Stradbroke.
1906. The Hon. Rosamund Hanbury.
1907. The Countess of Stradbroke.
1908. The Lady Cranworth.
1909. The Lady Mary Cayley.[1]
1910. Mrs Lomax.
1911. Mrs Lomax.

It has been a great honour to introduce these ladies whose kindness and courtesy have marked, without a single exception, all these years—but just as those two blessed virtues, patriotism and cosmopolitanism are apt to clash, the noble devotion of these ladies to their own particular village or villages is apt to clash with their equally noble devotion to their county.

I remember years ago one distinguished lady whose smiles to the happy recipients of trophy or prize—gradually subsided. The cause was not the arduousness of the task (though before the distribution was confined to the trophies, it was indeed arduous) but the fact that the name of her own school had not yet fallen from her lips, and the list was drawing to its end.

"I congratulate you," she kept whispering to the bowing successful candidate—"but I cannot understand—is there not some mistake? Where is ——," mentioning one of her own schools.

No satisfactory response being thus elicited from her bewildered auditors, the lady opened fire on me as I handed her the prizes—beginning very gently—"I say, Mr Swinburne, —— is coming on the list soon, I hope,"—but ending in something very like anger.

"Mr Swinburne—when *is* —— coming. No —— as yet. Do I not subscribe one guinea—I shan't go on—this is too bad—etc., etc." But a more generous-hearted and kinder friend of managers, teachers, and everyone else, never breathed; nor one who spared herself more.

In 1887 Mr Girling, President of the National Union of

[1] For the Lady Beatrice Pretyman, who most kindly made a special effort to take the place of The Countess of Stradbroke, whose indisposition prevented her coming. "A very great disappointment," Lord Stradbroke wrote for her, "but it cannot be helped."

Elementary Teachers, then addressed the meeting, principally upon the advantages of the East Suffolk Teachers' Circulating Library. He said he was "grateful to Mr Swinburne for the efforts he had made for creating healthy emulation between school and school, which had created in the minds of many of the children an *esprit de corps* which would make them jealous of the honour of their schools and try to keep up their reputation. It helped the teachers very much to know that their inspectors took a sympathetic interest in their work. From his own experience in a country district he must say he should have welcomed anything in the direction of increased facilities for getting books as a perfect Godsend, and he failed to understand why such a movement as this was not taken up with enthusiasm. He feared that among many of the lady teachers there was a little inclination, after they had once obtained their certificates, to cease troubling themselves to acquire further knowledge, thinking that in a few years they would be able to emancipate themselves in the way in which ladies did emancipate themselves from such duties (Laughter). He would remind them, however, as a matter of statistics, that they could not all emancipate themseves that way (Laughter and applause). He certainly hoped that teachers who lived in the towns would do all they could to help forward this project for the benefit of their brethren in the country. (Applause.)"

A headmistress who used to be at Sotterley, offered, though out of the district, to subscribe 5s. Here are extracts from a letter of hers in the year of the Imperial Exhibition in London, (1900) :—

"Sotterley School,
"*Jan 20th*, 1900.

"Dear Sir,—You cannot think how delighted my eyes were to behold the specimens of work sent from your schools to the great Imperial Institute. I congratulate the teachers of Leiston and Beccles Board School on the exhibits sent by them. More than one inspector has said to me: 'If you could satisfy Mr Swinburne, I am sure you will satisfy me.'"

In May 1892 :—

"No one can attach more importance than I do to such a

scheme and I hope it may long flourish.—With regards, yours very truly, GEO. KEKEWICH."

"A. J. Swinburne, Esq."

In 1891 :—

"It gives me real pleasure to be associated in ever so humble a way, with those of my colleagues, who like yourself, are not content with the mere routine duties of their office, but are making earnest efforts—outside of official requirements—to improve the schools and to give to teachers a higher ideal of their work.—Yours ever truly, J. G. FITCH."

"9th *Aug.* 1895.

"I recognise most fully the educational value of the scheme and I am delighted to hear that it has been so successful.—I am, yours very truly, GEO. KEKEWICH."

"A. J. Swinburne, Esq."

"*Nov.* 6*th*, 1896.

"DEAR MR SWINBURNE,—Obviously your prize scheme is an excellent work, and you are right in feeling proud of it.

"It always gives me a very real pleasure when I find officers of this Department doing so much more than the letter of their bond in the promotion of education in their districts. It increases enormously their influence for good, and puts them much more, in my opinion, in the position that they ought to occupy, than if they confined themselves to the inspecting and examining duties of which their strictly official work mainly consists. I heartily congratulate you on the success of your work.—I am, yours very sincerely,

"G. W. KEKEWICH."

In 1896 I said :—

"The most painful thing they had to contemplate was the mind-decay amongst children who had left school. If there was any such decay of body as there was of mind, the sanitary authorities would have to interfere."

Sir Geo. Kekewich, who was accorded three hearty cheers on rising, said he was present at the invitation of Mr Swinburne to support the Scheme, but so far as he could judge from the exhibition and assembly it needed but little support from him. It seemed to get all it wanted from the sur-

rounding country. He understood Mr Swinburne was the life and soul of the Association, and had done an admirable work in promoting it. [Applause.] There was no Inspector on their staff who was so interested in his schools and district, and none who worked harder. [Loud applause.]"

In 1897 the Late Canon Raven wrote in his Parish Magazine (Leiston) :—

"The annual meeting in connection with the Scheme was held at Saxmundham, on Saturday, July 3rd. It was decidedly the most interesting and successful meeting that has hitherto been held. Mr Swinburne must have felt it a signal mark of his appreciation by the Department, that Sir George Kekewich the permanent head of the Department, came from London in order to be present, and spoke in such praise of our Inspector. Those who know Mr Swinburne best, know that every word Sir George said of him was his just due."

And again in 1898 the same clergyman wrote :—

"We must congratulate Mr Swinburne on the great success he has achieved. It has been specially commended by the Education Department. We understand that the Scheme is peculiar to this district. No other inspector has had the courage or the energy to face its difficulties. We congratulate too, the committee on the way in which they have worked the Scheme. One thing is certain that it has raised, and that in the most pleasant way, the tone of the schools of East Suffolk."

"National Union of Teachers,
"71 Russell Square,
"London, W.C. *Dec.* 21*st*, 1899.

"I had already noted that Mr Swinburne was the moving spirit in the organisation, which might, I think, be copied in other parts of the country with good results,—I am, very faithfully yours, A. A. Thomas (*Secretary*).

"T. W. Bryant, Esq."

East Anglian Daily Times, Ipswich, Thursday, June 6th, 1901 :—

"Visit of the Duke of Devonshire to Suffolk

"The Duke of Devonshire, Lord President of the Council, has consented to attend the annual exhibitions and meetings

at Saxmundham, on Friday, July 19th, on the occasion of the coming-of-age of the East Suffolk Elementary School Prize Scheme, of which Mr A. J. Swinburne, H.M.I., the founder of the Scheme, in 1881, is president and treasurer."

1901:—

"Sir George Kekewich, the permanent secretary of the Board of Education, to whom the country owes a great debt of gratitude, kindly came in his stead, and on his arrival, together with the Countess of Stradbroke, who came down from London to distribute the prizes, was escorted to the scene of action by our lads of the C.L.B. The sum of £7 10s. was collected in the Tent, in aid of the camp expenses."

"In 1902 a high official has spoken of 'Mr Swinburne's admirable educational gymkhana.'"[1]

Two extracts from the president's addresses at Ipswich and Lowestoft in 1904[2]:—

"Such praise from Whitehall, from Suffolk, and from the sister of the King, for you will have seen the royal signed photo in the exhibition—and yet I have climbed up here to-day, so to speak, knife in hand, with my daughter, the Scheme, and aged 24, for my blameless victim. (Laughter.) Oh! that the chairman of the County Council Committee, entangled in our rough platform, may yet, somehow, prove a providential deliverance from this terrible ordeal! (Applause.) . . ."

"Although they had had a successful day at the baths, yet it was a sad one for him, for his daughter (the Scheme), aged 24, seemed to be drowning before his eyes, while he was bound hand and foot by the chains of enlarged area of district and a diminished source of subscription. Had the borough and county educational authorities the heart to let her sink in full vigour with ten shields round her neck?"

1904.—From a local newspaper I cull:—

"Mr Swinburne published a little volume of poems, which

[1] Extract from letter to the Newspaper signed:—Thomas Lomax (Chairman of the Yoxford School Board) and three Hon. Canons.

[2] It was in that year the brave Lady Hilda M'Neil so nobly sacrificed her young life to save another.

realized £25 net profit for the benefit of the Scheme. The following lines—

> 'Bear to be beaten; soothe the pain,
> Remembering 'tis thy brother's gain,
> A fool can know success is sweet,
> It takes a man to hail defeat.
> Lose well; and losing win a prize
> Beyond all words—like sunset skies.'

elicited an appreciation in a letter from an old scholar sent to his late schoolmaster in this district:—

"'I think if any fellow keeps this in mind he'll keep straight any time, for it applies to all spheres of life. Its grand! Fred's and my motto.'"

Another teacher wrote in 1905:—

"Those words proved a mascot upon which, I shall always look back with the greatest pleasure."

And let not the following lines, written by a London board school mistress who migrated to Suffolk, be too severely criticised on their literary side. I value them as the testimony of a very able and experienced school mistress and as a proof of the enthusiasm at the time. Even cows, I am told, yield more and better milk when sung or whistled to and Logic teaches us that the best of human beings are partly animals. No one knew who wrote it until she left —years after.

"The East Suffolk Prize Scheme, Saxmundham

"*July* 22*nd and* 23*rd*, 1904.

"A stir and fuss in an inland town,
A rushing of motors and laces;
A full-packed house for the Rose and Crown,
And a vision of childish faces.

Born of the soil that their footsteps press,
Its traces hanging around them,
In each sturdy step, and each golden head,
The children, but not as he found them.

With gentle bearing, and voices sweet,
Hear the little rustics singing;
Taste taught them Mendelssohn's strains were meet
To set silver voices swinging.

Poets there are who by pen and speech,
Raise men's souls to a higher level,
Supremer the poet, whose power can reach
Souls poised between earth and the devil.
. . . . . .
The words are halting, the measure bad;
But in Suffolk child hearts are weeping,
To feel the loosening hold of the strand,
Which held them in 'Swinburne's' keeping.

Still it seems to me, that his kindly hand,
With the breath of his high endeavour,
Has passed a blessing along the land,
And aided the children for ever.

AN EAST SUFFOLK TEACHER."

(*Reprinted from the "Aldeburgh Times," Aug.* 6, 1904.)

À propos of the neglect to teach swimming, I asked :—

"Why not stop the babies from learning to walk for themselves? Why not invent a machine to lift them along—a kind of self-help killer—so making self-help, the finest and fairest fruit in all education's garden, a weed to be killed!"

Of all the "tight corners" in thirty years of supervision, none was tighter than when Mr B. Burton, with the kindest of intentions and with the knowledge and power of a past master of his subject, ventured upon a corollary to his award as judge. Unfortunately he made a bad shot, when he said that it was easy to see which of the two competing choirs (a town and a village) came from the village; and like a barbed arrow the words "approximated more to the rural" rankled in the breast of the adult town choir. I do not think anything could have been done more calculated to impair the beneficent efforts of this extremely kind-hearted patron's generosity—for it was he who gave the splendid shield for adult village choirs. I once knew a small town in which, upon the post-master's purloining some postal orders, his appearance before the local tribunal received a headline worthy of a state trial, "The King versus the Postmaster of ——;" and I often think Idolatry mainly owed its origin to something like the provincial pride which in self contemplation gradually forgets a distant metropolis—though the most marvellous the world has ever seen. But over and

above the wounded *amour propre*; the town had only entered to ensure a race, and the vicar, truest of sportsmen, who sang with them, was also very musical and a composer!

In 1905 (from the *East Anglian Daily Times*):—

"Mr A. Rankine having addressed the gathering,

"The Rev. A. R. Upcher said, my Lord and Lady Stradbroke, Mr Swinburne, ladies and gentlemen, and though last not least, dear teachers all, I esteem it a great privilege and honour to be present once more among you at this magnificent meeting of our East Suffolk Prize Scheme, which now for nearly a quarter of a century under the able and indefatigable guidance of Mr Swinburne backed up by a devoted band of teachers and supported by a very large number of school managers and other friends, has performed such an excellent educational work. (Applause.) I have not the advantage of being a Suffolk man myself, but though not quite, I am nearly so, for though not a Suffolk man myself, I can say 'My mother was.' (Loud laughter.) I was born on the borders of Norfolk and Suffolk and therefore I am in the position of one, who has one leg in each county. (Laughter.) Now as it appears that there are some people who do not either favour or support this East Suffolk Prize Scheme as they ought, it will be well to remind ourselves what is the object of this scheme. It is to encourage managers, teachers, and scholars to take a more intelligent and earnest interest in the education of East Suffolk and in everything which tends to improve the tone and quality and results of education in its highest and best sense. (Cheers.) Is this a good object, or is it not? I humbly submit that it is. We come then, next to inquire how it is that certain educationists appear either to condemn this scheme with faint praise, or to retire from any active support thereof.

"It is because we are suffering at the present time from a temporary blot or disease, which seems to be affecting all our national institutions and services alike, whether they be military, naval or civil—I mean the principle of selecting for service on the governing bodies of these great institutions, men who are qualified, not by any expert knowledge of the subject in hand, but because they belong to some political party. While this state of things exists in England there will always

be blundering and muddling as an inevitable consequence in every department of our national life. Now, what is the composition of the managing body of this Prize Scheme? It is nothing more or less, than a body of experts in educational training. And therefore, we have only to walk through the various rooms and examine the exhibits and work of the children and to compare them with those of other years, to learn at a glance, that while the tone, efficiency and progress of educational work in East Suffolk have been on the upward grade for the last twenty-four years, it has been accomplished chiefly through the instrumentality of Mr Swinburne's Scheme, which has been loyally and ably carried out by the committee and teachers under his direction. How is it then that there can be *any* educationists, whether clergymen or laymen, who do not support such a scheme as this? Possibly, it may be because they are in the position of a certain agricultural labourer who confessed, 'I can't *read* "nawthin'," and I don't *know* "nawthin'," and I want somebody to teach me "suffin'"; in other words they do not understand the business—they want somebody to tell them "suffin'." (Laughter.) And the quickest and best way to learn is to come to these meetings of the Prize Scheme and hear the children sing and recite, and see them drill, and to examine the work done and the results produced during an educational year. It is, however, to be feared, that this evident want of interest is caused not merely on account of lack of knowledge, but because there are some people who count no runs as good, unless they come from their own bat, and who believe that nothing can be sound unless they do it themselves. Mr Swinburne and his committee therefore are to be congratulated, that a gentleman of high position in this county and one who is universally respected, both for kindness of heart and sound business capacity, has been found willing to come forward in what at one time seemed a critical period in the history of this Prize Scheme, at once to advocate its claims and to accept the position of its President. I allude of course to Lord Stradbroke. (Cheers and prolonged applause.) And the sincerest thanks are due to him for the benefit of his countenance and support when it is most wanted. (Renewed cheering and applause.) There was not much fear now that we should

hear any more talk of the scheme not being a good thing, and not worth supporting. (Applause.)

"Rev. R. Abbay seconded, and said he congratulated the masters and mistresses on the way they had brought the exhibition to so successful a pitch, and he certainly considered that the scheme was one calculated to assist in developing all the faculties of the mind and body. (Applause.) Teachers had an enormous responsibility, and he wished to see them rise to the highest level possible and to do their duty to the children not because they were paid for it, but because it was the highest duty that could be placed in their hands. (Applause.)

"The resolution having been carried by acclamation,

"Lord Stradbroke, who on rising was received with hearty applause, said that he considered it an honour to be president of a Scheme like that, and he thought they owed a great debt of gratitude to Mr Swinburne for the support he had given to the scheme for so many years. (Applause.) So long, too, as the teachers united and helped on those competitions they could feel sure that in East Suffolk the educational interests of the children were being well looked after. People could find objections to the Scheme, but he thought that any objections that might be raised could easily be got over. The fact of the Scheme competitions taking place every year kept the boys and girls up to the mark, and they owed a great deal to the teachers of East Suffolk for the way in which they did their works, and the keenness which they showed in the performance of their duties. So far as he could judge, there was every reason to believe that the children would, when they left school, be able to take their part in the world, and their minds, be so far advanced as to enable them to take up a higher education if they wished. He and Lady Stradbroke had been much struck by the high class of the exhibits, and they hoped to see further advance made as a result of the exhibition. No doubt London children had advantages over country children, but in needlework, at all events, he believed, the Suffolk children could hold their own and beat the London children. (Applause.) He thanked them for the kind way they had received him and Lady Stradbroke and he could assure those present that he was very glad to do anything to help forward the Scheme. (Applause.)

"Mr Busby having read a letter from the Rev. J. F. A. Hervey, in which he described the scheme as an interesting and valuable one, and wished it success, proposed a vote of thanks to the Countess of Stradbroke for kindly consenting to present the prizes. (Applause.)

"A vote of thanks to the chairman, and the singing of 'God Save the King' closed the long day and what the Rev. J. E. A. Hervey happily characterised as the best and most interesting 'show' of the whole year."

"My congratulations on the success of Saturday,

CHARLES J. STEWARD,

IPSWICH, 30. 7. 6. *Chairman Education Committee.*"

Extract from his speech, 28th July 1906 :—

"I take a very great interest in this Scheme."

"*Feb.* 1, 1906.

"It is an excellent—nay admirable institution, and I wish that other inspectors and localities had followed your example. . . . . It is such schemes as yours that awake and maintain interest in education, in the locality; such schemes are 'human,' and not dry as dust attempts to make prigs of the community, sincerely yours,

"SIR GEORGE KEKEWICH,

"*Late Secretary to the Board of Education.*"

The present Bishop of Stepney said in 1908 :—

"For that reason alone, he thought they had reason to thank from the bottom of their hearts those who had initiated the Scheme, who had carried it through dark times, who had given it their unwearied support—friends like Mr Busby, the secretary—(applause)—and the teachers—and others who had the happiness that day of seeing the movement dear to their hearts so popular and so thoroughly well established. (Applause.)

East Anglian Daily Times, July 31st, 1911 :—

"EAST SUFFOLK PRIZE SCHEME

SPEECH BY MR SWINBURNE

"The Municipal School at Ipswich was, on Saturday, the scene of great activity, for it was crowded with representatives,

teachers, and scholars from almost every school in East Suffolk. It was the occasion of the thirtieth annual series of competitions, which are known as the East Suffolk Prize Scheme."

Extract from Mr Swinburne's speech :—

"He (Mr Swinburne) felt like the true mother before Solomon—he would rather that the Scheme were someone else's than he should see it die."

From a leading article, *Suffolk Chronicle*, Aug. 4, '11 :—

"That the East Suffolk Prize Scheme should have existed over a period of thirty years, on an entirely voluntary basis, attests a degree of enthusiasm of which Suffolk people may justly feel proud. Everyone will accord a large measure of the credit to Mr A. J. Swinburne, now a veteran, in retirement from school inspection work; there are many others who, catching inspiration from the founder, have backed him up, and patronage has been generous.

"Hints were dropped during the proceedings at Ipswich last Saturday that this Prize Scheme might very well be worked by the Education Committee of the East Suffolk County Council and a prominent member of that committee promptly gave the assurance that such a proposal would be received sympathetically. Schoolmasters and mistresses know full well the value of the work; managers and officials should be equally cognisant of the beneficial results of this series of annual competitions. To children in country schools especially tests of this kind are inspiring. The high value of the movement should ensure the dominance of goodwill in any necessary re-arrangement, the sole object of which should be permanence, with necessary adaptation to the needs of the day.

"Mr Lomax, chairman of the East Suffolk Education Committee in closing the proceedings said that Mr Swinburne had thrown out a hint with regard to the Prize Scheme being worked by the County Council. If their managing committee came to them and made such a suggestion they would consider it in a friendly manner. The Education Committee had not the least wish to throw any cold water on the Scheme.

"Mrs Lomax kindly gave away the prizes."

The Leiston Observer, September 28th, 1911 :—

"The East Suffolk Prize Scheme

"The East Suffolk Prize Scheme, which since 1881 has done an immense amount of good amongst the schools of East Suffolk, in promoting annually keen scholastic competitions, is holding its annual swimming festival on Saturday October 7th, in the swimming baths at Lowestoft. . . . Handsome shields have been presented by Lady Gooch, Sir Saville Crossley, Sir Edward Beauchamp, M.P., and others. . . . It is a sight worth witnessing to see the high state of efficiency to which the children are brought by the enthusiasm and voluntary extra work of the teachers of our day schools in the county. . . . Mr A. J. Swinburne who initiated the scheme in 1881 has, in an unofficial manner done more than any other, we venture to say, for the better education of our children, and his long connection and arduous work in connection with the Prize Scheme is bearing fruit now, and will continue to do so for many years."—Extract from leading article.

APPENDIX IV

(Crowded Out)

The Parson's Plot is crowded out. A certain vicar, his zeal for his church out-running the limits of fair play, sprang upon me—so to speak—from behind; but his brother clergy rallied round like true sportsmen; Whitehall congratulated me on having won a victory without drawing my sword—and best of all I helped that vicar afterwards to get a more lucrative benefice—for he meant well, and though he never intended to, strengthened my hands more than any praise could have done—not to mention coals of fire. And of those golden opportunities for self-improvement—Evening Schools—I have only room for one story. Disgusted by the dwindling in the attendance, a zealous young master brought out a pair of boxing gloves and severely punished the solitary survivor of a most flourishing start. The blood long stained the school floor. What was that master's amazement when the whole class "turned up" the next night—"And might they please have the gloves on too." There is no accounting for taste.

And the many droll sayings of my hired driver! There was a clergyman who set before me champagne and some of his wife's gooseberry wine—both in corked odd decanters—and I was to tell him which was which. My indignation at the toughness of the aged cock was mollified by my driver's worse experience. He had had nothing but its head and neck!

Conducting a lady over his church he met her remark—"I miss saints in the windows," by "Madam, OUR saints are in the flesh"—patting his extensive bow-window. He certainly had plenty of room for them—had that vicar!

After he had been shown some statues in a garden, he asked me if I "see them things—a kind of man—stone I believe—to stand as a shy to anyone, I suppose, coming about of a night, over the premises."—This was the driver—not the vicar.

I had much to say, too, on recitation—about which my remarks some years ago may still be read:—

"Although there was nothing definitely stated as to what they should learn, he found an extraordinary fascination for certain poems throughout the district, as though all the teachers were bound to these three or four poems, such as 'Gray's Elegy' and 'The Deserted Village,' both beautiful poems, but not the only poems in the world. He did not take any credit for it—probably it was the work of the age—but there seemed to be a tendency to advance from the churchyard and the grave to the 'Deserted Village.' Our lives, however, were not so full of joyousness as to necessitate the spending of most of our poetical lives in the one or the other. (Laughter.) As to the male pupil teachers, there seemed to be a wonderful fondness on their part for that great speech of the Earl of Chatham about the employment of savage mercenaries. Its special connection with the work of pupil teachers he had certainly failed to discover; but he had often thought, when he asked himself if he might hope to hear it for the last time, of the concluding words, 'Never, never, never.' (Laughter.) Another selection that had a special fascination was Scott's 'Lady of the Lake,' and their friends, Roderick Dhu and Fitz-James, figured very prominently. How often had he heard that

> 'Ill-fared it then with Roderick Dhu,
> That on the field his targe he threw.'

—and later on of 'The Gael above, Fitz-James below,'

very suggestive of a prize fight from *Bell's Life*. (Laughter.) The meeting between Ellen and Fitz James was a favourite subject with the females. With the feelings which at that age we were all more or less prone to, 'Oh, need I tell that passion's name?' (Laughter.) Or—

> 'Not his the form, nor his the eye,
> That youthful maidens wont to fly.'

—(Much laughter.) He did not, of course, say a word against the poetry, but he wished to remind them that there was other poetry in the world. At one time it would seem that a single death palled upon their appetite and nothing short of 'The graves of a household' could satisfy it. Why 'We are seven' should be a favourite for childhood he never could divine—seeing that Wordsworth wrote it with the express object of showing that death is beyond the comprehension of a child."

Nor can I wholly omit that marvellous escape of the five Lowestoft girls, when the flood caused a large iron school to float away—leaving the cloak-room and the foundations standing as they were.

A strong current about 6 feet deep carried the structure through two stiff fences, for a distance of about 300 feet—and though water enough to float the harmonium came in, the five girls who had stayed for their dinner were afterwards safely rescued by a boat. The flower-pots in the windows remained as they were, and the girls thought the neighbouring houses, and not they, were being carried away—tho' the wire from the fences clung still to the outside of the school.

Yet one more reminiscence of my driver, with his born-actor face, a Sam Weller, except in his reasoned preference of flight to fight,—in pre-motor days.

A commercial traveller with whom I conversed at Lowestoft, on learning my name, seemed surprised at my good health, and told me he had often heard about me from this same driver, who spoke of me as "Our master." "Pitee, pitee, our master, nice genllman as he is, should be as he is—he'll drive from mornin' till evenin' and never call at a single public—I am frightened to dead there's sutthin' the matter wi' his innards," etc., etc. Nor is he the only one who would account for temperance by supposing its owner to be "afflicted."

The best intentioned of men, when their heads are crowded

with ideas, sometimes, like overflowing populations, make raids upon their fellows—more sparsely occupied in that respect.

By checking such an incursion Lord ——, an ex-guardsman, once did my friends yeoman service. Volley after volley of etymological dissertation from me over a stuffed specimen in his collection, which I had dubbed "Ox-bird"—a very hail-storm of Usk, Esk, Ex, Ux, Oxford, Yoxford, muddy Oose, etc.—were met by the calm and solitary dissyllable "Mud-bird," discharged at every lull in a determined but futile attempt to dislodge him from his stronghold.

Hours after—the subject forgotten—his parting shot completed the rout—"Good-bye, Swinburne—MUD-BIRDS."

But a certain distinguished Countess, verily one of nature's as well as convention's noblesse, did yet better service to me as well as to my friends, by more than once pruning that exuberance of officialism which is apt to flatter even sensible officials out of their senses. Take two instances—In a speech at Framlingham I had cited the late Lady Rose's "exceeding bitter cry," audible to all in a large dinner party, about her scullery-maid reading poetry, etc.; and my reply thereto—also audible through a painful pause—"Better be resting and in the light, with Longfellow, than 'walking' and in the dark, with some other fellow."

After that speech at Framlingham, I heard something, and no mistake! I shall never again forget that there are such things as Duchesses who have servants' libraries, etc., etc. On another occasion in a speech, in the Ipswich town hall, on cruelty to animals, I had risked an old story—to illustrate the folly of using magniloquent language, especially to children—that one about the village-town haberdasher whose placard "*Mens Conscia Recti*" struck dismay into the opposition haberdasher's breast—until the latter's happy thought went one further—and, next day, blazed out in a yet more conspicuous placard—"Men's (and Women's) Conscia Recti." I also told them of a wounded seagull at Thorpe—literally between the devil and the deep sea—for on the land side boys pelted her with stones, and on the other side the waves washed her nearer and nearer to her persecutors. Anxious to do justice to the forgiving expression in the poor bird's eyes, as I came on the scene, I first, when preparing the speech, compared her look to the forgiving glance of

Divine Pity on the Cross—but my wife branding this as profane, I substituted St Stephen's—though unfortunately I forgot to alter the words; I should have said—"Lay not this sin to their charge," but I said "Forgive them for they know not what they do." The smoke (so to speak) of the applause had not yet died away, when I was conscious of a tall graceful figure breaking through it—to make for me—flight hopeless—

I (to myself) "Hast thou found me, oh——!" (To the Countess) "It is the *stale* story—I knew you would ——"

Countess—"Nothing of the sort—I liked the story—never heard it before—but for goodness sake verify your quotations next time. Have you a Bible at home—or shall I write and send you the words? . . ." And there were many wise and many learned men there—but no one but this brilliant lady—and she entirely bookless—had pounced, with a hawk's unerring eye, on the blunder; and once more I had to warmly thank her for correction so vigilant and able, and to decline her most kind offer of written proof.

The changes in drill have proceeded at a breathless rate—military drill, inhaling drill, and how many others. The latest (older girls') drill I saw at a public exhibition, seemed to put calves before character—the adult teacher's display being lavish in this respect—though modesty comes before muscles. The boy at my old school whose envied pectoral muscles had been developed to a size large enough for the other sex, came to an early death, and how about women's vitality in the Insurance lists? Also a foot-ball was introduced. This ball worship is a Baal revival; feet now count for more than heads. Is there not something in the Psalms about "upside down." "This side up—with care" will have to be a label for men and education as well as for parcels.

I omitted to state, in Oxford days, that I was asked to be a member of VINCENT'S CLUB; and was proud to join.

APPENDIX V

(SPEECHES)

I quote three speeches which cover an interval of about twenty years, as my opinions are unchanged.

From a speech at the beautiful place of Mrs H. Buxton

(a warm friend of the Scheme) at Fritton more than twenty years ago :—

"Irregularity of attendance, like swarms of rats on ships which are victualling for long voyages, eats out the heart of schools.

"Much as I like the attendance officers I have met, I am not enamoured of the system. As with cruelty to animals, principles and love are better than prying and legislation. Love's magnet makes the veriest sceptic believe in miracles. The inspector can only be in one place at a time and sometimes he's not even there. As I drove the other day through a terrible storm to an inspection, I wondered in my close carriage whether a single child would be present.

"They were all present, smiling and happy.

"What was the secret? Two teachers with hearts in their work—and what a work! Each elementary teacher is a graft of a higher civilization in the hardy village stock. The transient course of the child's study—good as it is, as far as it goes—is as nothing compared with the educational effect of joint effort, affectionate anxiety not to disappoint an affectionate teacher, etc., for these will make better men and women for the Empire our villages will people. How gratifying is the improvement that has been bravely won by managers and teachers in the teeth of an opposition against which—reminding one of the difficulties in the emancipation of the black population in America—clergymen and teachers (and no class has done so much in East Suffolk in the disinterested support of education as the clergy) have had to struggle!

"1. *Against the prejudice of magistrates*, who from the highest motives hesitate to exert their authority, often wasting noble pity and sympathy on unworthy objects by accepting excuses we know to be flimsy, and so failing to secure us good attendance, the life blood of efficiency. Nay, some gentlemen will go so far as to speak hardly of teachers and inspectors, which reminds me of farmers who persecute moles, their best friends, working away underneath the soil to make it better. 'Give us gardening, cooking and needlework is their cry—not books.' But alas! concede them their wish and in a few years the apathy is as dense as ever.

"2. *Against the prejudice of farmers*, to whom (with exceptions of course) the only argument that has ever really told in favour of Education, is one that we use ourselves before going to a dentist—'the sooner begun the sooner ended.' So anxiously is the luscious morsel of cheap labour awaited! A small rural board in my district convened a meeting to consider the gravity of the situation revealed by the startling fact that their school had won the excellent merit mark. In a word it was as if they awoke in the morning to find enthusiasm planted in the night, and to mutter 'An enemy hath done this.' Summoning their master they explained how it had fallen upon them like an unexpected blow. That they had no idea an excellent school was forming in their midst, and finally that with the highest opinions of his powers and fidelity, they advised him to seek an opening elsewhere![1]

"3. *Against the prejudice of parents*, for foresight and self-denial are the offspring of intelligence, a blessing too rarely as yet in the possession of the parents. If they *do* appreciate the value of education it is as a result rather than as a power; as if a man used dumb-bells for the sake of the dumb-bells themselves; instead of for the exercise. Hence the vast waste in controversy over curricula, which reminds one of people who worry themselves about such questions as 'whether their dumb-bells are made of iron or brass,' etc. Hence upper standards thin and shrunken as blighted trees. Girls of fourteen used to abound; now I have several complaints of schools unable to muster a sewing 'team' to represent their school in the prize competition—because a girl of eleven is wanted! Hence, too, the awkward question 'are we not giving children enough to make them restless and proud; but not enough to give them the noble ballast of a thoughtful mind.' The early age of leaving school is among the most serious problems for modern philanthropists;

[1] My reader smiles incredulously. But what man of the world will not tell you that even at the Government Departments the surest road to promotion is to disturb the water as little as possible. The shock it was to me, when first I discovered that the rural school board suppressed rather than encouraged the Education for which it existed! But of late years I have begun to think that the great central Board at Whitehall, and Parliament itself—at heart are much of the same opinion as that rural school board.

for the better the schools the earlier they leave. Night schools seem the only present solution; and I heartily thank the clergy and teachers for the manner in which they have supported me in this opinion.

"In view, then, of all these difficulties I cannot better close my remarks than by repeating my own words at a similar gathering (and would there were more of them) at Framlingham in 1883—my feelings upon the subject remaining unaltered.

"In conclusion, as friends together—brothers and sisters in one arduous task—and, with attendance as it is, none but those well acquainted with schools know how arduous, let us get as much encouragement as we can from one another, and return to our work with fresh vigour, to face the discouragements we must encounter.

"I once heard a promising pupil teacher give a lesson on the discovery of America. 'Columbus never would succeed,' they said. If he did succeed worse still; it meant the ruin of the old country. They actually tried to drown him. But he persevered to the end. And what is your end? The end of each true manager and teacher—an end as noble as the discovery of continents is the development of Intelligence—a new, vast, undiscovered boon for your fellow-countrymen, the poor. No phantom El Dorado, no fond enthusiast's dream, this blessing at which you are aiming, but as genuinely and substantially superior to more showy benefits—as the industry and thrift of northern nations, to the richest silver mines of Peru. Towards that great end, invisible, I know, as yet, but still there, all true managers and teachers are steering. Oceans of time and toil may have to be crossed, but still steering steadily those serviceable, if sometimes, leaky vessels—their schools. They must think of Columbus. Their troubles are not like his. No one wants to kill them. Listen to two voices from Wales, on the subject. Mr A. Brogden, M.P., in dwelling on the importance of scientific knowledge for the labouring classes, said: 'A man whose mind was sufficiently informed and advanced is a happier man, and has within himself much subject for thought, which gives him a real interest in life. Such a man has a higher range of intellect, and is better able to perform the duties which devolve upon him.'"

"Mr T. Falconer, a county court judge, said:
'There is no danger of any human being learning too much. The danger is not from getting into deep water, but from being in the shallow. Without correct knowledge and cultivated powers of reasoning we cannot form a correct judgment, or see, as it were from afar, the consequences of our actions. The truth in most things lies at a distance, but the approach to it is open to every man, and on no man rests the duty to stop the road.' And from Scotland the president of the late conference of brethren there. 'To teachers I would say, 'Have a high ideal . . . ever remembering that . . . we more than others may leave behind us footprints on the sands of time.' "

In April 1911 at the Town Hall, Ipswich—to introduce my successor, Mr Grindrod :—

"I hope I shall not to-day make any *faux pas*, like that, of the nervous bridegroom, who, when called upon for a speech, stretching out his hand in the direction of the bride at his side, began—'I do not know why this thing is thrust upon me.'[1]

"In introducing Mr Grindrod my pleasure (not unmixed with pain) is enhanced by the conviction that the continuity of inspection cannot be broken under one, who tells me he comes with no intention of pulling up any plant, till he has had time to test its worth, an assurance which affords you and me immeasurable relief. Of course, even to a Suffolk H.M.I. there must be some unpleasantness, but my feelings on the whole may be compared to those of the tallow manufacturer, who, after retiring because he could not bear some of the smells, came back in a year and begged that he might be allowed to spend half an hour in that room which smelt the worst.

"Among the minor flowers is the Teachers' Library—imitated by the N.U.T.—and a Scheme, whose praises you have too often heard from me; but the words of a leading member of the East Suffolk Education Committee, the other day, that the general attitude of that authority was one of cordial approval, gladdens a father's heart. But Suffolk schools!

[1] I suppose I must have inadvertently stretched out my hand in the direction of my successor, for I cannot otherwise account for the applause and laughter which for some time prevented me from continuing.

—'Must I leave thee, Paradise'—best sums up my sorrow in severing my official connection with Suffolk countryside, Suffolk children, managers, teachers and all—all so kind to me. It has fallen to the lot of few to have lived in so charming a county and received so much kindness as I have. My enemies never spoke a truer word than when, in opposing the extension of my term of office, they said, "He has had a good innings.'

"At first I thought I could not bear the wrench, but it is easier now that I find that my friends the teachers are still my friends, and that I may still visit their schools—though not as the late Rector's widow, Mr Grindrod.

"And so once more, for my comfort and your own, let me beg you to bind round both arms this phylactery—from the mantelshelf of a very aged artist—'I have had a great deal of trouble in my life, and most of it—*never happened*.'

"And now that my fetters are off—about inspection—if an inspector may point out the faults he is liable to himself—Deliver us from Fads. A benevolent public pays the piper and calls the tune. The mischief of it is, there are as many calls as there are crazes in the mind of that public. 'Come,' say they, 'let us make gardeners of them, carpenters, soldiers, artists, cooks, and what not, and the inheritance shall be ours.' Never forget, you must make men before you make craftsmen.

"Where you have huge schools it is bad enough, but what of the rural schools, where the head teacher has to imitate the man one used to see in London—playing a whole band himself. Will you distract such an one by demanding fresh tunes ever? Our three L.E.A.'s have wisely left inspection to H.M.I. and his staff (and no part of my wrench has been more painful than parting with that admirable officer, Mr Hunt), but still there are tearful eyes, middle-aged despair, etc. A master, magnificent at military drill, is black-listed, because he has been left a yard behind in the breathless race to keep up with the latest physical exercise manual. The teacher's sleep is broken lest they publish yet another in the night. A middle-aged mistress, splendid at her work, girds herself to teach double digging, meantime a drill expert calls and blacklists her for not having the latest drill book. A mistress has her walls, like a veteran's breast, covered with needlework trophies; a London inspector calls, and

practically black-lists her for teaching younger infants needlework at all.

"I *have* known an inspector almost as bloodless as a figure of Euclid or an Algebraic formula, one who completely ignores your ninety-nine good points if you happen to lack his hundredth, though all the while, if you please, he lacks your ninety-nine. And I am not sure the modern trend does not set in that direction. In Heaven's name, let not any sympathy of mine be taken for connivance with 'slackers.' No genuine popularity was ever won by that sort of inspector.

"So the rural teacher toils, day after day, only to find his or her ideal gone, when he or she reaches the place where it was. Oh, when will they learn not to cut rural cloth with urban scissors? There should be a graveyard near every school for dead Fads—'Here lies the Schedule Idol; here lies Sloyd, died in infancy, etc.' Fads must be; but let us not throw cold water on the best quality on earth, devotion to duty, on any lines it likes, and let each develop on his own lines.

"The lonely semi-lighthouse life of many a rural schoolmistress surrounded by temptation and battling with ignorance on every side! We should leave sympathy and encouragement with her when we call. Such lives especially need kindness, and even those emblems of strength, the oak trees, spread every leaf to catch every gleam of sunshine. Shall we ask such an one to set her infants of six to write essays on paper on such subjects as, 'In what occupations are the farmers now engaged, and why have they not commenced them earlier?' or, 'What observation has occurred to you in passing through an April barley-field?' etc.

"Oh, anything but happy is the lot of the faddily inspected! At least an inspector can speak before he writes, and so give breathing time to amend a fault—can sympathetically indicate orally, not cruelly wound on paper.

"Though cleanliness and cleverness must be insisted upon, let us be merciful in our reprimand of those less happily supplied with hygienic appliances and culture than ourselves, remembering as the *parvenu* squire once told the school boys, on prize day, that every man cannot be a Euclid or—Algebra. We should not, as in the fable of the 'Fox and the Goat,' use the ignorance of others wherewith to lift

ourselves from obscurity to notice, but the gradual improvement of their understanding in these matters should rather be our goal. The sorrows of the faddily inspected seem to me to be reflected in that popular recitation in baby classes, 'How would yeww like it.' The babe has to be all smiles on the occasion of the visit of a very important relative, though all the while a pin is sticking into it—somewhere.

"'How would yeww like it?'

"But in town schools another percentage idol has arisen—compulsory competition in physical exercises. Competition, like stimulants, a blessing in moderation, is, in excess (*i.e.* compulsory), a maddening curse. And attendance shields are worse. While we teach the laws of hygiene and humanity in schools we force children to attend who ought to be at home on both of those principles. We put a premium on bad parentage.

"Of course there are faults on the other side. Perhaps the chief is a certain ambitious and bookish want of commonsense thoroughness, illustrated by a recent visit to a school where the older girls cramped into infant desks in the class room were tackling first-class adult science questions, such as 'Enumerate the best methods of cleansing a baby's bottle, or wheeling a babe's perambulator, etc.' But meantime, where were the babes? Shivering, by the hour, in a network of draughts dignified with the name of lobby.

"Also we do too much for the children. When motoring I saw a boy on the road with half a yard of bootlace flying. Should I anticipate God's law—Close on the heels of folly follows a fall? 'Yes, I will.'

"I point.

"His reply is equally laconic. He lifts his leg for me to fasten up the lace for him. We are too apt to tie their mental laces for them."

It was a red-letter day for me that April day, and none were present who will ever forget the genuine enthusiasm of the meeting, and Mr Grindrod is much too large-minded a man to begrudge me the large portion of applause that fell to my share. In an able speech, as tactful as it was kind, he referred in flattering terms to my blue book reports, from one point of which he quotes a remark which he had culled before he knew me—about the village boy who used at eight years of age to pick out nouns, at nine, adjectives and verbs, and at ten—stones!

At Ipswich in July 1911 :—

The presentation of an illuminated address and a purse of gold then took place to Mr A. J. Swinburne, amidst much enthusiasm.

Mr Eaton White's speech ended :—

"They would agree, for Mr Swinburne to have remained at his post for thirty-five years without being hanged by either party, was really something which neither they nor he would like to embark upon. (Laughter and applause.) They all recognised the kindly feelings that animated him, and the common sense he had brought to bear on those in authority in London. The prize scheme was a great venture, and it had been satisfactorily carried out. There was a danger of their being too parochial, and the competition gave the children a wider outlook on life, and perhaps a humbler view of their own attainments. He concluded by asking Mrs Lomax to make the presentation. (Applause.)

"Rev. J. F. A. Hervey uttered a few remarks, saying he hoped they would make up their minds to carry on this Scheme. It had been a great success in the past, and it deserved to be maintained in the future, to the best of their ability. (Applause.) The exhibition had shown them that more and more was being done for the boys. He trusted the fruits of these efforts would be more manifest as time went on. People talked of the old times; but his opinion was that they were rough times, and he was glad he was living in the nineteenth century, and not in the fifteenth. (Laughter and applause.)

"Mr Swinburne then advanced to the front of the platform, amidst cheers, and Mr Busby read the address, which was as follows :—

"To Alfred James Swinburne, Esq.

"Dear Sir,—Teachers and a few of your many friends in East Suffolk, upon your retirement from the position of H.M. Inspector of schools, ask your acceptance of the accompanying purse of gold, as a slight token of their appreciation of the unique and excellent services rendered by you to the cause of Education during the long period of thirty-one years.

"You have always had the interests of true education at heart, and as the originator of the East Suffolk prize scheme and the Teachers' Library you have done much outside your

official duties to promote a cordial spirit of co-operation amongst managers, teachers, and scholars, and have succeeded in materially raising the standard of attainments throughout the county.

"We pray that you may be spared in good health for many years to enjoy your well-earned retirement.

"Signed, on behalf of subscribers, by Frederick Wase, President, and William Busby, Secretary of the East Suffolk County Association of Teachers."

The illumination work is admirably done, and includes a representation of the arms of the county of Suffolk.

The Rev. C. Luther Wanstall, of Butley, said he thought one of the principal points had been omitted regarding Mr Swinburne. He was like his late Majesty King Edward—a peacemaker.

Mrs Lomax, wife of the chairman of the Education Committee of East Suffolk handed the gifts to Mr Swinburne, and the audience rose and sang vigorously, "For he's a jolly good fellow."

Mr Swinburne, in replying, said, "Mr Lomax, ladies and gentleman, I feel like the gourmand upon whom his friends played a practical joke. Knowing his favourite dish to be haunch of venison, they invited him to dinner, and did him thoroughly well; then, when he had partaken to his fill of all the good things, in came the venison on a lordly dish. The gourmand burst into tears and left the house. That is just what I should like to do now. I cannot find words to thank you enough. At the Town Hall in April, you all gave me your kind attention, and allowed me to talk to my heart's content, and to-day when you are here to lend me a kindly hearing once again, I, having said so much, have nothing left to say. Still, it is a great pleasure to see you all assembled once again, to recognise the faces of those with whom I have worked for so many years, and to remember the struggles we have had, and the fights we have fought shoulder to shoulder, and to feel that this our child, whose birthday we are here to celebrate, has grown and thriven beyond our happiest expectations; and that to-day it has reached the almost mature age of nine and twenty. (Applause.)

"While parting from you, and once more warmly thanking you, I want to say that, after thirty-five years work as in-

spector, I am able to realise how much of England's history is in your hands. Every year you send forth fresh recruits to swell the ranks of her workers. People are apt to forget that our soldiers and sailors of the future are in your keeping. For example, what use will our much-vaunted Dreadnoughts be if the gunner has not had enough arithmetical grounding to sight the gun? Then why this languid interest, from Parliament, downwards, whenever Elementary Education is on the tapis? It is a pardonable failing of a virile and insular stock, and there is little fault to find with that stock, but wider views (to speak Suffolk) were 'spreeding.' I quote two of many proofs. Lord Stradbroke, president of this Scheme, said at Framlingham: 'In elementary schools boys thought so long as they learned reading and writing they were educated, whereas reading and writing were only a means for education.' Why (asks a *Standard* correspondent) is the village boy or girl to be shaped according to a supposed vocation? Who can settle that vocation?

"And here we arrive again at the oft-mooted question—Fads. There are two kinds of Fads, the Fads that are visitors, and the Fads that come to stay, but who can say which is which until each has had a fair trial? And let us remember the wonders that have been worked and the miraculous changes that have taken place since the "good old days." It is, however, on behalf of the teachers that I would tilt against the mischievous genus of Fad.

"I once saw a water wagtail seated on a rail, alongside of what I took to be a pigeon. The little bird was vainly endeavouring to satisfy the insatiable appetite of her monster foster-child. A cuckoo had laid its egg in that water wagtail's nest; and a more pathetic picture of drooping misery than that poor little mother could not be imagined. Its very name was belied. Its little tail had positively ceased to wag. Fads are very like cuckoos' eggs. Ideas are deposited and Fads hatched, and, sooner or later, the country schoolmaster and mistress—don't they just know it? (Laughter and applause.) The inevitable outcome of our British Constitution is a frequent change of heads, and, however noble and zealous their intentions may be, it is very hard for the wagtail to be constantly fathering or mothering new ideas of such gigantic proportions. The sword of Damocles, in the shape of new resolutions—and

oh! such original ideas—is for ever suspended over the national school teacher's head. (Laughter and applause.) When Toynbee Hall poured its contents into Whitehall, it was like the effect of the fall of Constantinople on mediæval Europe, or shall we not rather, compare it to Bedlam let loose.

"'Is it a new regulation?' I was asked by a distracted mistress a little while back, 'that all middle aged teachers have to retire now?' (Laughter.)

"'Are the girls to have miniature rifles?'

"'The girls must garden!'

"The cottage woman, who is already wife, mother, nurse, housemaid, cook, laundress, all in one—and who fills many other roles as well with five children under eight—is to be a gardener, too!

"My friends I am officially deceased. (Laughter.) My late colleague, Mr Myers, of psychical research fame, left a sealed packet at the Cambridge post-office, which he promised to return and open—after decease. He did *not* come back—but I do! (Laughter.) I dreamed a dream. I was amongst a crowd of fellow-departed fads—for I am at last what I have so often been called, a 'spectre.' (Laughter.) They were all there: Military Drill, moustached and melancholy, like the walrus of tearful fame in 'Alice's Adventures,' reminded me—curiously enough, of that splendid guardsman who once brought a team to this competition, and who, having suffered defeat, went his way, muttering, 'Beaten by a bloomin' schoolmaster.' (Laughter.) Sloyd (who seemed to recall Alice's carpenter) and a host of others of 'the dear departed' were there. Menageries, museums, merit grant, school walks, libraries, the schedule idol, school boards—all seemed in my dream-bewitched brain to be revolving to the rhythmical cadence of 'Will you, won't you?' 'Will you, won't you?' 'Will you join the dance?'—and I had to! (Laughter.)

"I told them all the latest news—about the new well-pump boys, and the new boy bee-keepers, and the school missionary, etc., and as they listened they wept again wondering how soon these poor tender dears, too, would have to join the dance.[1]

[1] NOTE (later).—All but the bee-keepers have joined. Those who have kept bees know that for ordinary boys bee-keeping is about as sensible an idea as taking small farms—Bee-keepers will shortly join the dance.

"My friends, I know how courageously you contend against manifold difficulties, how anxious you are to do your duty by the children, whose futures have been placed in your care; but for your own sakes, as well as theirs, do not do too much for the bairns. God gives every bird its food, but He does not throw it into the nest: and to teach children the art of self-help is a very needful part of their education. (Applause.) Pedagogue is the Greek for one who leads a child, but that word has fallen as far from its original meaning as Lucifer from Heaven. Talbot, when Bishop of Rochester, talking of what he called the Doctrinaire or Pedant—the 'unteachable variety of the teacher type'—said that contact with the lives of men was a good corrective, but there was a better, namely, contact with the lives of the children about them. Children took the teachers out of themselves.

"By the paths of insight, sympathy and love—a little child shall lead them. And so it is a mutual guidance. The teachers of East Suffolk, I am proud to say, are pedagogues in the best sense of the term—a consummation to which the scheme has not a little contributed. In all the shifting sands of changeful opinion one thing is certain: thoroughness is the prime requisite for a good education. I know a lady whose creams are made of milk, and who lays the butter on thick everywhere—but on the bread. (Laughter.) We lay the butter on thick over prefatory memoranda, suggestions, and platforms, but on the bread itself—the staff of mental life, the beginning of wisdom—we have such interminable curricula to cover in so short a time that it has perforce to be a superficial smattering. To start with, we do our best to sever the beginning of wisdom from its immemorial and indissoluble partner, the fear of the Lord—a fear more than ever proved in practice to be the only safe guarantee of a good understanding. (Applause.) In ante-Council days, some of you will remember how the lamentation ran, 'Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers.' Now however, I sometimes fear we have got beyond that, for knowledge does not come, and wisdom lingers still. And all the while, my Budget-bitten brothers, the education-rate, to quote the delicious words of one of their own aldermen, is 'creeping up — by leaps and bounds.' (Laughter.) It is also certain that the kindly sympathy and encouragement of local managers finds a poor substitute in a committee

sitting at a distant town; nor can the interest of these local managers be sustained if they are reduced to nonentities. But we must be grateful for the self-denial of so many of the chief people in the county on the Education Authority. Some officials may sometimes possibly be somewhat 'townified,' but after all they are not like *Punch's* London lady, who, in response to the farmer's polite observation, 'Tidy lot of hay, miss,' replies, 'It *is* tidy, isn't it? and I suppose you're going to thresh it now.' (Loud laughter.) Furthermore, if some of the local magnates are not as enthusiastic as they might be over mental training for its own sake, things are evidently worse in other counties. 'Mr Punch' again tells us of the H.M.I. who inquired of a boy he was examining, 'Who wrote Hamlet?' His question was met by tears, and the anxious repudiation, 'Please, sir, I didn't.' That evening after dinner the story was retailed for the benefit of the local squire, who laughingly replied, 'You may depend the young rascal *did* write it.' (Laughter and applause.)

"Dr Crowfoot, alderman of the East Suffolk County Council educational committee, proposed a vote of thanks to Mr and Mrs Lomax, the latter of whom was to present the shields. He had had a long acquaintance with Mr Swinburne, and he was a member of the Beccles School Board before Mr Swinburne came to the county. He had a pleasant and agreeable recollection of all Mr Swinburne had done, and of the help and assistance he had been to them. He conferred benefits upon them that were felt down to the present day. (Applause.) That gathering was a proof of the regard in which he was held. It would be a disgrace if they allowed the Prize Scheme to go down. He hoped Mr Swinburne would take into his retirement the kindly feelings that were felt for him by all. (Applause.)"—(Extract from *East Anglian Daily Times*.)

I end this book with one more retrospect and one more regret. Two of my forefathers fell at Evesham; and two more (Edward and Gilbert) at Bosworth. The latter 'was slene at Bosworth fyld berynge Kyng Rycharde's standart,' when that fierce rush at Henry VII. cost Brandon his life, though it brought the strawberry leaves to his son who was reared in Henry VII.'s nursery; where he began by losing

his heart to the Princess Mary, and ended by being almost the only distinguished personage who did *not* lose his head to his royal brother-in-law. If not on Butley's glorious ruin, the cinquefoils which the families of Hamilton and Swinburne derived from the Umfrevilles, may still be seen over the porch at Easton Park, Suffolk. Furthermore (to select one from many instances) the family motto "Semel et semper" was also lived up to by William Swinburne who for the Stuarts died "a landless man"—his grandson receiving the baronetcy from Whitehall. It was something to have preserved that unbroken line for all those centuries; and though they had to change their Crown (after two of them who had been out with their cousin, Lord Derwentwater (1715) stirred England—in spite of England's prejudice—if not Europe, to tears of pity, by their fidelity and awful fate in Newgate Gaol) the head of the family did not change his Creed till late in the eighteenth century; and if I may say it without being mistaken for the sordid wretch who only works for a reward; and if I may be allowed to possess (in common with those who work for me) a natural desire, however sentimental, for a fitting completion of a life-long service that might so easily have been granted—'Parvo componere magnos—I was foolish enough to hope that Whitehall would have rewarded my work which produced efficiency in the county and a scheme unique in England (if not in the world) with something better than an abrupt and point-blank refusal to extend my term of office for a year, though I was vigorous and of a ripened experience; though 12,000 of the best names in East Suffolk endorsed my petition, and though the popularity which they urged as an inducement was won as everybody in East Suffolk knows by smiting as much as by smiles. Nevertheless—"Semel et Semper!"

Post scriptum.—Hurrah! Lord Stradbroke has once more stepped into the breach—mainly on the ground of the "keenness produced among the children, a quality not too common in these days"—and the Scheme is saved. All honour to the teachers; and to Lady Quilter, Mr Hudson, Sir Thos. Gosch, the Hon. W. Lowther, and others, who proved fidèles à mort. It will not be run by the County Council; and the schemer of schemes, like the Dreamer of Dreams, hauled out of the darkness of his pit, will bask once more in the sunshine—of children's smiles.

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